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A History of the Development of the Educational Theatre in Negro Collegesand Universities From 1911 to 1959.

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A HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL THEATRE IN NEGRO COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES FROM 1911 TO 1959

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To Marie, my wife; and my children, Gail, Ava, Wanda, Floyd, and Anthony.

A HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL THEATRE IN NEGRO COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES FROM 1911 TO 1959

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ABSTRACT

For an understanding of the development of the educational theatre in Negro colleges and universities during the period 1911-1959, it is first necessary to describe the general growth of Negro educational institutions of higher learning which gave rise to the widespread development of the educational theatre in these institutions. This study has concerned itself with the rise of the Negro college and university; the pioneers in the movement toward a Negro theatre; and with the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts, which organization has, for the most part, served as the pioneer dramatic organization among Negro educational institutions in the movement to develop a functional educational theatre.

In 1911, the first organization in dramatics in a Negro college was founded at Howard University in Washington, D. C. But it was not until 1930 that the first Negro educational theatre organization, The Intercollegiate Dramatic Association, was founded by Randolph Edmonds. Five years later, in 1935, the second dramatic organization, The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts, was organized by the same man. Both were based on the theory that the hope of the genuine Negro theatre is to be found in the organizational approach in Negro colleges.

This study analyzes the influence of pioneer playwrights and actors on the development of the Negro theatre; surveys the work of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts as a factor in

the development of the educational theatre in Negro colleges by summarizing philosophies, procedures and problems as indicated in the association's publications; and traces the growth of the curriculum in speech and drama in Negro colleges and universities.

INTRODUCTION

Statement of The Problem: The purpose of the present study is to survey and record in some detail the history of the educational theatre movement in Negro colleges and universities from 1911 to 1959. The study is divided into four main parts: (1) The development of Negro colleges and universities; (2) Pioneers in the movement toward a Negro theatre, with emphasis on the contributions of playwrights, Negro and white, and the pioneer Negro actors; (3) Negro dramatic organizations, with emphasis on The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts; and (4) Development of the curriculum in theatre and speech, with emphasis on speech training in the Negro colleges, curricular and extra-curricular.

Definition of Terms: In this study the term "Educational Theatre" is used to designate non-professional dramatic activity, curricular and extra-curricular in the Negro college. It includes: (1) Little Theatres, (2) Players Guilds, (3) Experimental Theatres, (4) Community Theatres, under the supervision of college drama departments. The term as used in this study includes the idea that because theatre art in all its forms needs artists, it needs educational theatre. It implies a situation which prepares (1) teachers who are discriminating judges of aesthetic values; and (2) theatre artists who push their creative capacities to the utmost because they have learned the true worth of their art.

The terms "College" and "University" are freely used to describe a very considerable variety of educational institutions. Their popular use includes almost every Negro institution of learning higher than, and based on, the training of the high school. The term includes the teachers college, the normal school, the private college, and the Land-grant college.

Significance of the Problem: The educational theatre in the Negro college and university has had its share of problems in a struggle to survive. Its aim has been to make itself an integral part of the college's scheme of education.

The spread of the activity program of the educational theatre and the subsequent emphasis on the curricular program in drama and theatre in the member colleges of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts, with the concomitant emphasis upon more and better trained faculty and staff members has made this study significant.

Each college that will be mentioned in the study of the drama association has availed itself of some kind of drama program. In some instances the program falls under the heading of the English Department; the Speech and English Department; the English and Speech Department; the Drama Department; the Drama and Speech Department; the English, Speech and Drama Department; and the Speech and Drama Department.

No significant study has yet been made of the history and

development of the educational theatre in Negro colleges and universities which covers the subject completely. This study proposes to investigate, analyze and evaluate the educational theatre program in the Negro college, and show its significant movements in community relations.

Method of Treating the Subject: The subject will be dealt with chronologically, falling into two periods, (1) 1911-1936, (2) 1936-1959. First, in tracing the development of the educational theatre, it will be necessary to show the general development of the Negro college and university: societies, agencies and foundations that helped in the development of these schools; and something of their purposes and trends. Then an attempt will be made to show the pioneering period with its movements toward a significant place for the Negro in the theatre: a period of formulating a point of departure, with playwrights developing plays to express Negro life and talent. Here the historical holdings of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts will be used to show developments in that organization's activities leading toward a Negro Theatre. Conference procedings will be analyzed to determine if the organizational approach to drama in the Negro colleges and universities has improved the status of the Negro in Drama.

The historical method will be used in this study. The materials that will be used for collecting data are: books; college catalogues; drama and theatre journals; minutes of the Southern Association of

Dramatic and Speech Arts; letters; and interviews.

The study is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 deals with the development of the Negro colleges and universities. Chapter 2 deals with pioneers in the Negro Theatre. Chapters 3 and 4 trace the development of The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. Chapter 5 analyzes the association's publication. Chapter 6 outlines the development of the curriculum in the Negro colleges; and Chapter 7 is a summary analysis and conclusion.

CHAPTER I

DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEGRO COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY

When one traces the history of the Negro college and then traces the history of drama and the educational theatre in the Negro college he finds that both have been slow in development.

Butcher[1] makes the point that drama in particular has been slow in acceptance on the Negro college campus.

History[2] points to 1911 as the beginning period for the drama in the Negro college. The account shows that Howard University, Washington, D. C., launched in a very informal way the first drama club at a Negro college. This club was under the direction of Ernest E. Just, a professor of English. At Howard and at other colleges that started clubs subsequently in the earlier period, dramatics remained an extra-curricular activity, poorly housed and too often directed by inadequately trained personnel, until about 1921.

The Negro college was probably not so poorly directed from its beginning as the Negro Drama. But one finds in almost all of the recorded literature that the Negro college like the Negro drama was born of a desperate need. For in the words of Horace Mann Bond, "If, indeed, it is first a college born of freedom, then it is, second, a college born

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[1]Margaret J. Butcher, The Negro in American Culture (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), p. 202.

[2]Ibid., p. 202.

of desperate need."[3] As an example of the point he has referred to, Bond mentions that Ashmun Collegiate Institute, in Ehester, Pennsylvania (Lincoln University since 1865), was founded in 1854 by a Presbyterian minister in answer to the plea of a Negro widow woman whose two sons had been refused admission at every other college within a hundred miles to which she made application. He says that Wilbeforce University in Ohio was similarly established to meet the need founded on exclusion.

Thus Bond says "In these circumstances are to be found the historic, and indeed, contemporary sources of the institution we know as the Negro college."[4]

Redd[5] says that historically, Negro higher and professional education may be regarded as having passed through four distinct periods in development, covering a period of eighty-five years. The first period was characterized, he says, by the founding through missionary effort and personal philanthropy of those schools for freedmen which were to become today's Negro colleges. This period extended roughly from 1864 - 1903. During the second period, covering the years from 1903 - 1916, higher education for Negroes assumed a definite pattern of organization and physical development through subventions

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3 Horace M. Bond, "The Evolution and Present Status of Negro Higher and Professional Education," Journal of Negro Education XVII, (Summer, 1948), p. 224.

4 Ibid., p. 224.

5 George N. Redd, "Present Status of Negro Higher and Professional Education: A Critical Summary," Journal of Negro Education XVII (Summer, 1948), p. 400.

from the great philanthropic boards and foundations. In the third period, he says, from 1916 - 1930, increased public funds, combined with those from organized philanthropy, gave rise to larger and more adequate physical plants and stimulated in Negro colleges efforts toward educational planning. The fourth period, according to Redd, extending from 1930 to the present, was one of most rapid development in Negro higher education in both quantity and quality. This, it is pointed out, was stimulated chiefly by the decisions of regional and national bodies to accredit Negro institutions in accordance with established standards.

Norris[6] made thepoint that the American Negro college is more than two centuries younger than the earliest white institutions of higher learning in this country.

It is recorded[7] that fifty years age there were eighty-five or more Negro schools that called themselves colleges but might have been appropriately classified as elementary and secondary schools.

DuBois[8] says Negro colleges were named before they were born.

Gallagher[9] pointed out that a sober and unbiased reading of history does not support the notion that the early schools for Negroes were fantastic concoctions of the grammarian's impracti-

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[6]C. W. Norris, "The Negro College at Mid-Century," The Quarterly Review of Higher Education Among Negroes, XIX (January, 1951), p. 7.

[7]Ibid., p. 7.

[8]W. E. B. DuBois, Souls of Black Folk (Chicago: A. C. McClung and Company, 1915), p. 97.

[9]Buell G. Gallagher, American Caste and The Negro College (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), p. 211.

cality. He says they were straightforward, conscientious efforts to train the "mind.... and the heart," and they were rooted in the immediate problems of the students. But he says "They were modeled after the New England colleges."

It is further pointed out by Gallagher that many persons engaged in the education of Negroes in the earlier decades insisted that the educational opportunities for Negroes should be in every respect as good as those for whites. Thus began the historic process from 1860-1930 which culminated in the accreditation of some of the better Negro colleges. Conformity to the stereotyped pattern of the liberal arts college therefore was placed at a premium.

The year 1930 was significant in the history of the Negro college and also it was significant in the development of drama in the Negro college. It was said earlier that the year 1930 culminated in the accreditation of some of the better Negro colleges. It will be noted that Howard University was one of the first Negro colleges accredited. Further significance of this will be pointed out in later chapters, but it can be said now that Howard University, which first organized a drama club in 1911, joined with several other Negro colleges in 1930 to form the first Negro Collegiate Drama Association.

The years before 1930 may be referred to as formative years in the development of the Negro college and the drama and the theatre in the Negro college. And it may very well be assumed at this early period in the study that the stereotyped pattern of the liberal arts

program in the Negro colleges--patterned after the New England Schools--made the acceptance of drama and theatre a slow process.

Blauch and Jenkins[10] point out that although the education of Negroes is for the most part conducted in separate institutions, it must never be forgotten that it is an integral part of and is extricably interwoven with American education in general. They place emphasis on the fact that the same social, economic, and cultural forces have affected the education of the Negro as have affected the education of the majority group. They say that because of the resulting interrelationship, and because the education of Negroes developed later, it naturally followed the general pattern of the education of white persons. The schools and colleges for Negroes were not only established by white religious and philanthropic interests, but the first teachers were largely white graduates of the northern institutions who went south as missionaries, carrying their educational and cultural traditions with them and transmitting them to the Negroes whom they taught and with whom they came in contact. As Negroes developed educationally, they went to the northern colleges and universities for advanced training, and then returned to teach in their own institutions. Consequently, as it is pointed

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[10]Lloyd E. Blauch and Martin D. Jenkins, Intensive Study of Selected Colleges For Negroes. No. 6, Vol. III, U. S. Office of Education (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1942), p. v. (Foreward)

out, "The colleges for Negroes in the main became prototypes of the northern colleges for whites."[11]

Clark[12] comments that no sharp line divides the eighteenth century from the nineteenth in American collegiate dramatics. He makes the point that it was a period of rapid acceleration in the growth of higher education in this country, and no longer was the American college to be a monopoly of the eastern seaboard states. He makes the point though that the church continued to be the major influence in the founding of new colleges (150 denominational colleges were founded between 1800 and 1861, as compared to eighteen state institutions), and the concept of the colleges as a "nursery of ministers" continued, if anything, stronger than before. Clark also makes the point that the greatly increased number of colleges and the varying circumstances under which they were operated in this period make it unwise to generalize about administrative policy toward extra-curricular drama. The rise of evangelism, for example, seems to have strongly affected play-giving in some colleges, whereas in others it made little difference. And, according to Clark, "The forces of orthodox religion, after a temporary setback during the Revolution, regained their ascendancy over the cultural life of this country at the turn of the century . . . . This ascendancy was maintained in large part up to

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[11] Ibid., p. v.

[12] John L. Clark, "Educational Dramatics in Nineteenth-Century Colleges," A History of Speech Education In America (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954), Chapter XXIII, p. 527.

the time of the Civil War."[13]

Since generalization relative to the historical development of institutions for the higher education of Negroes can be derived only by an examination of the work of the founders, agencies and philanthropies, one feels it necessary to examine the work of these groups--in relation to the development of the Negro college.

According to Bond[14] the American Missionary Association was the agency of New England humanitarianism through which Hampton Institute, Howard University, Fisk University, Atlanta University, Straight College (Dillard University since 1934), and Talladega College were founded. It was pointed out that in the charters of these colleges "No reference to race is to be found . . . . The founders who built these institutions . . . left open the doors . . . while they created institutions specifically for the most needy . . . the Freedmen." It was Bond who emphasized that "It may well be said that these colleges . . . represented a cultural invasion from New England. One might say that their fate was the fate of an entire cultural force in America." The fact can hardly be denied that these colleges left evidence of their strength. In a brief generation these institution succeeded in transmitting the elements of the culture. In a mind like that of W. E. B. DuBois, the social force they represented

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[13]Ibid., p. 534.

[14]Bond, The Evolution and Present Status of Negro Higher and Professional Education. p. 225.

left a residue of sentiments and attitudes he was privileged, "Through the grace of God and extraordinary longevity of talent, to carry among his people for more than two additional generations." And one finds that "In a mind like that of Booker T. Washington, the New England culture left the deposit of respect for order, for cleanliness, for industry, for thrift, that, in a Negro, were so exceptional in his time as to pass for genius, which was not far from wrong."[15]

Holmes[16] makes the point that the institutions were named "colleges" and "universities" by their founders who expected them to grow up to their ideals ultimately. These far-visioned educators gave them adult names at the "baptizin'," but, he says they did not take the illiterate Negroes from the cotton fields and offer them at once the curriculum of the New England Colleges.

The mission school was obliged to become elementary school, high school, and college in turn. The missionary teachers who taught these subjects were liberally educated in the current scholarship of the period, and as undergraduates had often been among the best scholars in their colleges.[17] They made no concessions to inferiority, assumed or real; the number of students allowed to enter upon or complete the college course was rigidly restricted. Exceptional as was their attain-

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[15] Ibid., p. 228.

[16] Dwight O. W. Holmes, The Evolution of the Negro College. Contributions to Education No. 609 (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1934), p. 298.

[17] Horace M. Bond, The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1934), pp. 360-363.

ment as masters of subject matter, the superior social order from which they were descended gave them an even greater advantage in contact with students who possessed no intellectual tradition. There is evidence which shows that they did not patronize the students they taught, but treated them as human beings. Deeply religious, they infused something of their own Puritan code into those about them. The institutions maintained internally a strict discipline that gave order to minds and bodies unaccustomed to any sort of regimentation.

Early in the development of Hampton and Fisk, a controversy arose as to what should constitute the higher education of the Negro. Atlanta University was included. The situation is here recounted in part:

> General Armstrong, the founder of Hampton Institute, was the only missionary leader whose early background was alien to New England. A native of Hawaii, he was familiar with the Hilo Manual Labor School in the islands, and he observed that". . . it had turned out men less brilliant than the advanced schools, but more solid." While Cravath's students at Fisk and Ware's students at Atlanta were translating Latin, Armstrong set his pupils to work at "useful trades and occupations."
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> . . . . At Fisk Cravath, in addition to being president, was professor of moral philosophy; and at Hampton Armstrong reserved as his prerogative the instruction of senior students in the same subject. Armstrong had been enrolled in a class in moral philosophy taught by Mark Hopkins at Williams, and as a textbook in the Negro school he used Hopkin's "Outline Study of Man."[18]

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[18] Ibid., p. 363.

Booker T. Washington was Hampton's most prominent graduate, and soon after his monumental achievement at Tuskegee attracted national attention, he became the arbiter of such matters as affected the education of his race. He said, "I would set no limits to the attainment of the Negro in arts, in letters or statesmanship; but I believe the surest way to reach those ends is by laying the foundations in the little things of life that lie immediately at one's door."[19] W. E. B. DuBois, a Fisk University graduate who took his doctorate at Harvard in 1895, insisted that inversion had always been the rule in the development of culture, and that it was as inevitable as it was necessary. DuBois is quoted as saying "The Negro race is going to be saved by its exceptional men . . . if we make money the object of man-training, we shall make money-makers but not necessarily men; if we make technical skill the object of education, we may possess artisans but not, in nature, men."[20]

The age was one in which the "vocationalism" seized upon the American college. Appreciating the magic in Washington's personality and his visible good works at Tuskegee, the practical men of the day upon whose philanthropy the higher education of the Negro depended were convinced that it was the "alchemy of industrial training" which had produced so great a marvel. Part of the mystery, at least,

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[19] Ibid., p. 363.

[20] Ibid., p. 363.

lay in the alchemy of Mark Hopkins which filtered through the hand and brain of Samuel Chapman Armstrong. But philanthropy preferred to concentrate its efforts on "industrial training," to the neglect of Charles Eliot's plea: "The only way to have good primary schools and grammar schools in Massachusetts is to have high and normal schools and colleges, in which the higher teachers are trained. It must be so throughout the South; the Negro race needs absolutely these higher facilities of education."[21] It is a matter of record that the cause of higher education for Negroes was further embarrassed by a multitude of inferior institutions that sprang up everywhere in the South, and flooded the section with "cheap degrees and cheaper people."[22]

The fact seems to be established --from the material investigated to this point -- that the private colleges were the beginning point for the Negro college. The circumstances pertaining to the development of these private colleges will be pursued further. It is probably inherent in what has already been presented about these schools that the Negro college was, first, a college born of freedom and need. The feeling is that it was a college symbolizing man's highest mental qualities; and probably testifying to the right of enjoyment of every opportunity without distinction.

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[21] Ibid., p. 364.

[22] Ibid., p. 364.

The work of the missionary societies has stood the test of even present day accrediting standards. For as Jones' report made in 1916 pointed out, in addition to maintaining a high quality program of instruction, colleges for Negroes have been confronted with the equally critical problem of meeting accreditation standards. This study further pointed out that, at the very outset in the development of higher education for Negroes, no recognition could be given for the quality of the work done. Colleges for Negroes could not meet even the minimum standards required for accreditation. Jones found that "Hardly a colored college meets the standards required for accreditation. Only three institutions, Howard University, Fisk University, and Meharry Medical College have student bodies, teaching force, and equipment, and income, sufficient to warrent the characterization of 'college.'"[23]

The four original college centers that are most often talked about in the literature, as having made the most notable advancement at the highest level for Negro education are: Howard University, Washington, D. C.; Fisk University and Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tennessee; Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia; and Straight College, New Orleans, Louisiana. Fisk University, established immediately after the Civil War, is said to have had the good fortune to number among its founders and early teachers, men of rich scholarship. It seems that they insisted upon offering to the freedmen the

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[23]Thomas J. Jones, Negro Education in the United States (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1916), Bulletin No. 38, p. 58.

same kind and quality of learning that they themselves possessed and respected. Thus, it can be assumed that they established a standard and a tradition at Fisk which made it easy to continue sound scholarship.

Embree said of Fisk University, "The student body is the best of any of the Negro colleges . . . . While its scope is much less than Howard's its work is of the highest quality."[24]

It should be mentioned that Atlanta University like Howard and Fisk offers graduate work, leading to the Master's degree in several fields.

Two other important centers of Negro education are Hampton and Tuskegee Institute, Each of these centers now offers the Master's degree in several fields. It is said that "Their functions from the beginning have been different from those of Howard, Fisk, Atlanta, Straight, and Talladega. Hampton and Tuskegee were from their beginning founded to train Negro youth to do well and dignify the vocations. Both are credited with arousing interest generally in Negro education throughout the country."[25]

Early in the development of Atlanta University a confederation was formed with Morehouse college and Spelman college. Morehouse is

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[24]Edwin R. Embree, Brown America (New York: The Viking Press, 1931), p. 135.

[25]Ibid., p. 135.

an undergraduate college for men and Spelman is an undergraduate college for women. A central library owned by Atlanta University serves the group.

The mission colleges -- the private colleges -- served until the machinery of State Education could be set in motion. The mission schools gave the freedman confidence in his ability to learn. Booker T. Washington, the first president of Tuskegee Institute, was one of the first fruits of the mission schools.[26] Washington preached a philosophy of education for the Negro that was different from that which the leaders at Howard, Fisk, and some of the other private colleges preached. Where Fisk, Howard, Atlanta, and the like, had emphasized training in the cultural subjects, Washington, at Tuskegee, emphasized training in manual skills of farming and trades and domestic service. It is perhaps of some consequence that it is emphasized in much of the literature that to many Southerners, both Negro and white, Booker T. Washington--and his philosophy of education for the Negro -- became the great leader. Although not all Negroes (and presumably not all whites) accepted his doctrine, the rank and file did. Under Booker Washington, Tuskegee flourished. Northerners and Southerners met physically upon its campus, and upon its platform. Many writers say that money poured in and official support was given not only to Tuskegee but to Negro colleges in every Southern State. It is said that "Washington's influence set a tide toward cooperation in schools and Negro welfare

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[26] Ibid., p. 122.

that flowed forward steadily."[27]

The philanthropic foundations are known to have been active in the promotion of Negro colleges and Negro education. It seems that their policies of philanthropy aimed not so much to build institutions themselves as to arouse and stimulate social and government forces to meet their responsibilities.

Emphasis up to this time has been on the private colleges. It seems necessary now to take a brief look at the developing process in the State colleges and universities. One would probably not expect the colleges founded by the states to be of the same character as those founded by the American Missionary Association, the agency of New England humanitarianism. The colleges founded by the states were different in character.

According to Bond[28], in Mississippi and Alabama, the Negro state colleges resulted from an articulate Negro voting constituency demanding the equivalent though separate institutions. He says that the oldest state college for Negroes, now the Alabama State Teachers College at Montgomery, Alabama, was founded through the persistent efforts of Peyton Finley, a Negro serving as a member of the Alabama Board of Education, a body with legislative powers. Like Alcorn College in Mississippi, this institution, during the Reconstruction

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[27]Ibid., p. 123

[28]Horace Mann Bond, Negro Education in Alabama (Washington, D. C.: The Associated Publishers, Inc., 1939), p. 105.

Period, was designed as a university and had the name "Alabama Colored Peoples University."[29] Alcorn University, founded in 1871, became an "Agricultural and Normal School," as the "Alabama Colored Peoples University" became the "Montogomery Normal School," only after the end of Reconstruction put a period to the hopes of the Freedmen.

The very titles of these State-established schools conveyed the changing conceptions in the public mind, and thereby the changing definitions, not only of the scope of the college, but also that proposed for the race for which they were established. For example, "Alabama Colored Peoples University" became the "Normal School, then it became the "Alabama State Teachers College" in 1930; Prairie View State College" became "Prairie View State University"; "Texas State University" became "Texas Southern University"; and the "Oklahoma Agricultural and Normal University" became "Langston University."

The picture changed somewhat after World War I, and after a mass migration that affected the economic system of the Southern region. At this point the assorted "Institutes," "Colleges" and "Universities" were on their way to becoming genuine instruments of the higher education. And perhaps not of small consequence is the fact that developing high schools began to push into these yet embryonic institutions a host of students, increasingly better prepared to do work on the collegiate level.

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29 Ibid., p. 105.

The following statement is, in the estimation of the writer, a good one in regards to the developing role of the Negro State Colleges. It follows:

> Should one now attempt a summary evaluation of the Negro State College in the South today (1948), the evidences of whatever evils must accompany mushroom growth would not be lacking. On the other hand, these colleges possess the great compensating factor of youth; they therefore have a tremendous vitality. The administrators are more than likely to be young men of the most superior training; the colleges have had to be staffed too quickly and with too desperate an intention . . . to afford the luxury of politics. The faculities, too, are young faculities; and with a student body with no parental tradition of higher education, stand like pioneers in a new world.[30]

One finds that every southern state has established at least one, and many have two and three colleges for the higher education of Negroes, especially for the training of teachers. In fact, a fairly well organized teacher training program will pretty adequately describe the curriculum of most Negro state colleges from their earliest development until quite recently.

Now since the work of the educational foundations can be woven throughout the total development in colleges for Negroes, it seems timely to specify evolving trends in educational philanthropy as a factor in the increase and betterment in the physical aspects of the

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30 Horace M. Bond, The Evolution and Present Status of Negro Higher and Professional Education, p. 230.

Negro college, as well as enhancing greater possibility for accreditation by the regional and national accrediting agencies.

Leavell[31] pointed out that the first private endowment fund set aside for the education of the American Negro came to be known as the Dr. Bray Fund. It was found that this fund had nine hundred pounds which were devoted to the instruction of Negroes in the West Indies and North America.

The interest of the various philanthropic organizations in developing Negro higher education in the first half of the 20th century left no little influence in this development. Also, it seems that, until after World War I, gifts of philanthropic organizations were largely on the basis of charity "handouts," and the foundations made little effort to influence fundamentally the sound development of higher education for Negroes. It was found that the first large educational foundation was the Peabody Education Fund. There followed the creation of four additional funds, namely: the John F. Slater Fund, The General Education Board, the Anna T. Jeanes Fund, and the Julius Rosenwald Foundation. Also, the Phelps-Stokes Fund.[32] It is not an overstatement, one thinks, to say these Funds (educational foundations) have worked directly for the advancement of Negro education in the South. It is probable that these Funds have touched every phase of

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[31]Ullin W. Leavell, Philanthropy in Negro Education. Contributions to Education No. 100 (Nashville, Tennessee; George Peabody College for Teachers, 1930), p. 57.

[32]Ibid., p. 57.

Negro education through their varied activities.

In 1867 the George Peabody Fund made the first gift to educational philanthropy. The following letter seems to embody the purpose of the fund:

> I will give to you the sum of one million dollars to be by you and your successors held in trust, and the income thereof used and applied in your discretion for the promotion and encouragement of intellectual, moral, or industrial education among the young of the more destitute portions of the South and Southwestern States of our union; my purpose being that the benefits intended shall be distributed among the entire population, without other distinction than their needs and the opportunities of usefulness to the.[33]

The record[34] shows that the Peabody Fund was dissolved in 1914 and the funds from it were given over to the John F. Slater Fund.

The John F. Slater Fund was created in 1882 and one million dollars set aside, according to Leavell, "For the general purpose of uplifting the lately emancipated population of the Southern States and their posterity, by conferring on them the blessings of Christian education."[35] The first plan of the Slater Fund was to use the Fund for the training of teachers for Negro people in suitable institutions of higher learning. During the period 1882-1900, appropriations were made chiefly to private and church institutions.

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[33] Ibid., p. 60.

[34] Ibid., p. 60.

[35] Ibid., p. 62.

The donations given to public schools were mainly for industrial and vocational training, it seems. During its first year, 1883, this Fund's Board made a total appropriation of $16,250 to twelve institutions.[36] The Slater Fund has steadfastly maintained its policy of assistance to denominational institutions of college grade. One notes that prior to 1926, its donations went to colleges to pay the salaries of industrial, agricultural and normal teachers. A complete statement of the board's activities since its founding in 1882 down to 1929 shows that out of a total of about $3,252,000 granted to all causes of Negro education, the sum of $2,244,000, or about 70 per cent, has been granted to private and church institutions. The total amount granted by the Slater Board to various types of institutions from 1921 to 1929 was $1,057,000. Of this, the appropriations to public education totalled about $728,000, or about 69 per cent, of all grants, while private education received about $329,000, or about 31 per cent.[37] From this, one gets the picture that the Slater Fund did much to raise the standards of colleges for Negroes, at least in a physical sense, to the point where they were nearer to what was considered standard in the system of American education.

The Anna T. Jeanes Fund was the gift of a quiet Philadelphian,

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[36] Charles W. Dabney, Universal Education in the South, Vol. II (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936), p. 436.

[37] Ibid., p. 439.

Miss Anna T. Jeanes. According to Bond[38], it was at the solicitation of George Foster Peabody, of the General Education Board, that Miss Jeanes gave that foundation $200,000 in 1905 for the specific purpose of helping Negro rural schools in the South. It is noted that she made the stipulation that Hollis B. Frissell, then principal of Hampton Institute, and Booker T. Washington of Tuskegee Institute be consulted in making plans for the disposition of this money. At the beginning of the idea Miss Jeanes said, "Others have given to the large schools; if I could, I should like to help the little country schools."[39] The record shows that the first teacher employed with this idea in mind was Mrs. M. L. Sorrell, of Iberville Parish, Louisiana.[40] The first plan was modified on the suggestion of Jackson Davis, then Superintendent of Schools in Henrico County, Virginia. Mr. Davis had employed a capable Negro woman, Miss Virginia E. Randolph, to inaugurate the experiment in his county. The new plan called for the demonstration teacher to become an actual supervisor on a county-wide basis. The plan was enthusiastically accepted by Dr. James Hardy Dillard, and by 1908-1909, sixty-five "Jeanes" teachers, or county supervisors for the Negro schools, were actively engaged in the work. The Jeanes program grew in time and the number of Jeanes supervisors increased, until in 1929 313 Jeanes supervisors

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[38] Horace M. Bond, Education of the Negro in the American Social Order, p. 136.

[39] Ibid., p. 136.

[40] Ibid., p. 42.

were operating in 311 Southern counties. In support of the work, the Jeanes Fund paid $104,095, while the amount realized from public expenditures was $188,089. Also, one finds that since 1919, other foundations engaged in the education of Negroes have contributed to the Jeanes work.[41]

The General Education Board was created on January 12, 1903 for the promotion of education within the United States of America without distinction of race, sex, or creed.[42] It is found that the Board has directed its efforts chiefly into two lines of indeavor, namely: higher education, and education in the South.[43] This board has rendered aid to Negro education in the South, first, by assistance to private institutions established by Northern church organizations and by Southern Negroes; and second, by stimulation in the development of an efficient system of public education for Negroes in the South.[44]

The General Education Board has contributed to the standardizing movement in the Negro colleges by gathering and classifying data concerning colleges and granting subsidies to those that were most promising. In its report, 1929-1930, the Board recognized the fact that colleges for Negroes had never been rated in the manner that colleges for white persons had been rated, and being aware of the

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[41] Ibid., p. 137.

[42] Leavell, Philanthropy of Negro Education, p. 76.

[43] Ibid., p. 68.

[44] Ibid., p. 71.

interest the Southern Association (The Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools) was manifesting in this problem with a view to upgrading Negro institutions according to the same standards as those applied to white institutions, the Board made an appropriation of $35,000 to be available over a three-year period to pay the salary and traveling expenses of a director for this work and other expenses involved.[45] By 1929, the General Education Board had expended in various services dealing with the education of Negroes, $20,986,576. Of this sum, $5,375,000 represented conditional grants to endowment campaigns of eleven Negro colleges: Fisk University, Hampton Institute, Knoxvill College, Lincoln University, Morehouse College, Shaw University, Spelman College, Talladega College, Tuskegee Institute, Virginia Union University, and Wiley University.[46]

From its founding in 1902 to the year 1952, the General Education Board appropriated a total of $315,965,984.42 for all causes of Negro education, both public and private, $207,095,946.47 of the total sum already having been paid out to the institutions.[47]

The Julius Rosenwald Fund, like the General Education Board Fund, has helped in the development of the Negro colleges and universities It has likewise been noted that Julius Rosenwald through his philan-

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[45] Annual Report of the General Education Board, 1929-1930, p. 31.

[46] Horace M. Bond, Education of the Negro in the American Social Order, p. 138.

[47] Annual Report of the General Education Board, 1952, p. 77.

thropy has given aid more in the nature of stimulating the people and the public officials to a broader interest their public schools, especially the rural schools.

With regards to contributions to the development of the colleges, one notes that in the fall of 1911, Rosenwald visited Tuskegee at the invitation of its founder.[48] At this time he pledged $5,000 to the institute for five years, conditioned, the record shows, as all of his gifts were, upon additional gifts to match his donation. It was found that in 1930-1931, there was expended $505,005 in developing private colleges and professional schools, twenty institutions being helped in "buildings," endowment, and current expenses."[49] The largest contributions were to Howard University, Fisk University, Meharry Medical College, Atlanta University, Spelman College, and Dillard University. The sum of $136,692 was spent "to make possible advanced study by 165 individuals, chiefly teachers."[50] The expanded program of the Rosenwald Fund was made possible by a donation from Mr. Rosenwald four years before his death, which occurred in 1932.

The Phelps-Stokes Fund was created in 1909 through a bequest of the late Miss Caroline Phelps-Stokes, who in her will bequeathed the sum of $100,000 specifying that "The income should be used among other

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[48] Horace M. Bond, Education of the Negro in the American Social Order, p. 140.

[49] Ibid., p. 142.

[50] Ibid., p. 142.

purposes for the education of Negroes both in Africa and the United States."[51] The major contributions of the Phelps-Stokes Fund to the higher education of Negroes have been along the lines of surveys of education, aid to schools and colleges, aid to educational organizations, publications, and allied interests.

In 1917, the Phelps-Stokes Fund spent $50,000 and enlisted the services of Dr. Thomas Jessie Jones in a survey of 800 institutions (33 of them colleges) devoted to secondary and higher education of Negroes.[52] In 1928, the Phelps-Stokes Fund, a group of seventy-nine colleges in nineteen states, and the United States Bureau of Education cooperated in conducting at a cost of $16,000 a survey of Negro higher education in these institutions.[53] The Bureau of Education published and distributed 2,500 complete copies and 3,500 digests of study for the purpose of disseminating the findings to interested persons and agencies. There is evidence that more substantial and sustained grants resulted from the surveys. The survey in 1928 was made with the ultimate accreditation of Negro colleges in mind. One finds that it was largely because of the showing that the institutions made in the survey that recognition and accreditation followed for a considerable number of the colleges. Besides the surveys, the

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[51] Ibid., p. 143.

[52] James Hardy Dillard, (et al.), Twenty-Year Report of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1911-1931. New York, The Fund, 1932.

[53] Ibid.

principal contributions of the Fund have been direct financial aid to institutions and educational organizations and the cooperation with such institutions in meeting their various problems of an educational or financial character.[54]

A closer look at some of the Negro colleges and their development is necessary. What about the present trends in some of the Negro colleges and universities? Obviously one cannot get a fair picture of the trends without some notion of the stated purposes from a sampling of these schools. In a study made by Blauch and Jenkins[55], which included twenty-five colleges well known among Negroes and for Negroes, the general conclusion and observations were that, with a few notable exceptions, the colleges and universities studied had not given extended consideration to their purposes. From this study one gets the general impression that most of these colleges are operating-- or were at the time of the study--in a traditional way without giving much thought to their aims and objectives. The study says of the Negro colleges and universities in the investigation, "They go on from year to year, sometimes changing somewhat the work they do but without clearly formulating the basis for their programs of service."[56]

Of the twenty-five colleges and universities studied, twelve were

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[54] Ibid., pp. 14-15.

[55] Lloyd E. Blauch and Martin D. Jenkins, Extensive Study of Selected Colleges For Negroes, p. 13.

[56] Ibid., p. 13.

private schools and thirteen were state schools. The list included: Tuskegee Institute, Arkansas State College, Howard University, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical State University, Morris Brown College; Fort Valley State College, Southern University, Morgan State College, Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College, Lincoln University (Missouri), Langston University, Johnson C. Smith University, Fayetteville State Teachers College, Fisk University, Lane College, Tillotson College, Virginia Union University, Prairie View State College, Miles Memorial College, Philander Smith College, Louisville Municipal College, Xavier University, Morris College, Allen University, and West Virginia State College.

The character of some of the statements on aims and purposes may be seen as follows. Fort Valley: "The college plans a program that is consistant with the program of education in the state of Georgia, and it is based upon seven problems of living common to all groups and persisting through life. For each of these seven problems, an analysis is made of what the college student, (1) will study as a freshman and sophomore; (2) will do as a freshman and sophomore; (3) will study as a junior and senior and as an adult citizen; and (4) will do as a junior and senior and as an adult citizen."[57] A checklist of the activities included in the "Scope Chart," which is intended to help the student see for himself how he is educating himself at the Fort Valley State College, is

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[57] Ibid., p. 3.

so arranged that the student can check, after each activity, the ones he is performing and the ones the college is providing. The student is enabled, therefore, both to judge himself and to judge the college and its courses.

The authors of the study point out a rather clear statement of purposes from another college in the study. These purposes were: (1) To offer such instruction as will make it possible for the student to acquire the essentials of factual information and an elementary understanding of the methods of thinking and work in each of the three instructional divisions: the social sciences, the natural sciences, and the humanities; (2) to enable the student to achieve a reasonable mastery of subject matter and methods of work in a particular field, so far as this may be expected on an undergraduate level; (3) to prepare the student for professional and graduate study in certain fields; (4) to develop in the student an intelligent consciousness of the major social problems of the present day; (5) to assist the student to acquire that social intelligence and those ethical standards which will enable him to carry on his whole social experience as far as possible with understanding and good will; (6) to develop in the student an interest in the achievement of the Negro with special emphasis upon the problems of his life in America and his future progress; (7) to aid the student to act intelligently in solving his racial problems; (8) to offer to the student body and to the community at large those opportunities which are inaccessable except through the

aid of the college; and (9) to carry on a definite program of vocational guidance through which the student may be acquainted with possible vocational opportunities which exist or which may be created.

Other examples of statements of purpose in marked contrast to those already mentioned may be noted:

> (1) . . . . College seeks to acquaint its students with the experiences of the human race from the dawn of civilization to the present time. The philosophy is that unless people are acquainted with the past and its struggles, they cannot fully appreciate the blessings of its achievements, nor are they prepared to assume the duties and responsibilities of the future. They certainly cannot disregard these opportunities. The ultimate end is the development of fine social attitudes, good moral character, sound scholarship that reflects good judgment, poise, proper initiative which is necessary for safe leadership, all registering in a fine personality.
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> (2) The general aim of the college is to provide a learning situation in which students, through various types of activity, may develop well-balanced, integrated personalities; to instill ideals of citizenship, to prepare elementary and high-school teachers, to train for the vocations, to offer a broad liberal education, and definite preparation for graduate or professional work.
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> (3) . . . . The school is open to students of all faiths, with the aim to teach the truth of vital Christianity, to better prepare young men and young women for lives of usefulness and make them followers of Christ.[58]

The investigators of this study found that in at least four of the institutions the statements of aims "Are an inheritance from the past--collections of ideas which have accumulated apparently without collective or critical study."[59] They studied the catalogues of

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[58] Ibid., p. 8.

[59] Ibid., p. 8.

twenty-four of the colleges and universities which contained general statements of purpose. Their analysis of these statements "indicates a great variety of phraseology and ideas," which may be classified into two groups--nonoccupational and occupational. These phrases and clauses indicating nonoccupational purposes are not easily grouped into large and exclusive categories, but for practical purposes they may be placed under eleven headings as follows:

1. Culture and general education (8 institutions). To lead the student to appreciate life as a unified whole; to offer a broad liberal education; to provide a general education in order to prepare students for the civilization in which they find themselves.

2. Knowledge of scholarship, understanding (9 institutions). To develop in the student scholarship, the development of sound scholarship that reflects good judgment, to acquaint students with experiences of the human race from the dawn of civilization to the present; achievement of thoroughness in scholarship; to provide unexcelled training for scholarship.

3. Personality and personality traits (3 institutions). To develop well-balanced, integrated personalities; to develop in the highest degree possible the total personality of the student; to encourage and develop prompt action, personal responsibility.

4. Mental power (5 institutions). To think for himself, clearly, honestly, and precisely; to stimulate an intellectual desire for truth; intellectual growth; to encourage and develop habits of accurate thought; to enable the student to be creative.

5. Social competence and citizenship (13 institutions). Instruction in the fundamental laws of the United States and in the rights and duties of citizens; to develop those qualities that make for highest citizenship; to make law-abiding, self-supporting citizens.

6. Character, Morals, and Religion (16 institutions). Development of good moral character; reliability and dependability or personality and character; expressing esthetic and spiritual impulses; provide opportunity for moral and spiritual

growth under positive Christian influences.

7. Health and physical competence (3 institutions). Maintaining physical, mental, and emotional health; acquisition and maintenance of sound physical and mental health; physically fit.

8. Guidance (3 institutions). To carry on a definite program of vocational guidance; to apply educational guidance on the basis of individual needs; to help each student discover his own abilities and talent as well as his personal limitations.

9. Negro race; service to Negroes (5 institutions). To develop in the student an interest in the achievement of the Negro; to aid the student to act intelligently in solving his racial problems; to make available a liberal arts curriculum for Negro students; to prepare Negro leaders for wholesome participation in community life; to prepare teachers for the secondary schools for Negroes . . .; to assist in the promotion of high standards for the Negro schools of the Southwest by sending out into them efficiently trained teachers.

10. Foundations for advanced study and specialized work (9 institutions). To provide preliminary training for students, who, after graduation, plan to study law, medicine, or theology; to afford definite preparation for graduate or professional work; to provide preliminary training for the various professions; to train those who wish to prepare for other professions such as medicine, dentistry, business, and engineering; to provide the basic foundations for graduate study or for professional training; to prepare for graduate work those who evidence special capabilities, and to prepare for entrance into professional schools.

11. Unclassified (9 institutions). To speak and to write the English language correctly and effectively, and to have a knowledge of reading at least one modern foreign language; receiving and transmitting ideas; to offer the students and the community apportunities otherwise unaccessible.[61]

There is considerable merit in the analysis made by Blauch and Jenkins. If one may judge from the analysis of the statements of

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[61] Ibid., p. 10.

purpose, it seems apparent that the principal emphasis in the colleges and universities was on nonoccupational rather than occupational education. Perhaps this was true because a general liberal arts education is cheaper to provide than training for occupations. Perhaps it is true because education in the liberal arts is traditional and is, therefore, looked upon as thoroughly respectable. And yet a good bit of the literature emphasized the fact that in recent years there has developed a tendency to question the typical liberal arts education, particularly for the large number of students now attending college. It is recorded[62] that there are signs of change which indicate that a type of education more closely related to earning a living, developing good communities, and providing better homes appears to be receiving more widespread attention. One notes that in this development such institutions as Tuskegee Institute, the Land-Grant colleges, and colleges with well developed teacher education programs, as Jackson State College and Grambling College have exerted an important influence. The following is an account of a conference of Land-Grant college presidents:

> The presidents of 15 land-grant colleges made educational history in a three-day conference at Hampton Institute the week of June 21 when they approved a proposal to have the colleges conduct a series of co-operative studies on the American Negro's social conditions, stressing his economic status during and after the Second World War. The plan was outlined in detail in consultation with a number of nationally known experts on employment, defense training, the programs of the Army and

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[62] Ibid., p. 11.

> Navy, labor unions, and other issues. The co-operative study of socio-economic conditions among Negroes, aimed at accumulating a scientific body of knowledge which, when tabulated and interpreted, can be used as the basis for raising the standards of living and cultural pattern of American Negroes through education, work, law, and social action. It will be financed by the land-grant colleges and conducted by qualified instructors on their staffs. Data will be brought together periodically, compared, edited, and published annually in convenient form for the use of students, legislators, and social reformers.[63]

Despite this one bright spot with regards to the conference of the presidents of the land-grant colleges, the findings of Blauch and Jenkins merit careful consideration. Their study comments on the fact that within the general frame-work of higher education there is considerable leeway for an institution to set up and strive to attain unique purposes. This study -- and many others too -- alludes to the fact that accrediting associations now encourage, as they put it, "experimentation with new ideas."[64] But it seems that despite this leeway, only a small number of the colleges in the Blauch and Jenkins study (some of these colleges are among the land-grant colleges) have made use of the leeway to invent new methods and procedures, to pioneer with new ideas, and to explore promising fields not heretofore cultivated. There did seem to exist a certain individuality among the institutions, but one wonders if this might be the result of circumstances rather than the outcome of purposeful planning and a desire to blaze new trails.

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[63] W. E. B. DuBois (ed.), Report of the First Conference of Negro Land-Grant Colleges (Atlanta, Georgia: The Atlanta University Publications, 1934), p. 26.

[64] Op. Cit., p. 11.

Bond expresses an idea in his The Evolution and Present Status of Negro Higher and Professional Education which the writer thinks is most appropriate at this time. He says:

> It is greatly to be hoped that at least some of these institutions can seize the opportunity that now is theirs, and never will be again, to throw off some of the shackles of the tradition-wrapped higher educational institutions and essay new approaches in curriculum and structure . . . . [65]

The Negro college was born of a desperate need, but finds itself in desperate need to rid itself of the shackles of tradition. Some movements in that direction seem apparent in some of the Negro colleges. In some others, one feels about them as Bond does when he says "In all too many cases, however, the deadly virus of doing what comes naturally has seized upon presidents and deans, for whom the natural thing is to do what they were taught to do . . ."[66]

The next chapter will show the Negro in another phase of his development: Pioneers In The Movement Toward a Negro Theatre. Here, too, the development seems slow, but there are occasional evidences of the enlistment of the exploratory spirit. There are signs of hope in the expressed needs of the creative personality.

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[65] Horace M. Bond, "The Evolution and Present Status of Negro Higher and Professional Education," p. 230.

[66] Ibid., p. 230.

CHAPTER II

PIONEERS IN THE MOVEMENT TOWARD A NEGRO THEATRE

Contributions of Playwrights and Actors. It is the purpose of this chapter to give a brief background to the Negro's gift to the drama of temperament rather than of tradition. To do this it will be necessary to show the contributions made by playwrights--Negro and white; the work of a few actors, mostly Negro; and then to approach the treatment of drama in Negro colleges and universities through the work of organizations founded by Negroes.

One source points out that the truest reflection of any age can be found in its literature.[1] The American Negro, in his struggle to rise to what many Negroes call "man's status" may be termed a fine example of this contention. Cline[2] says the early American dramatists, forced by public taste, busied themselves with comedies and tragedies in the Restoration manner, with countless Pochontas plays, and with numerous Revolutionary spectacles. And that dramatically the Negro was ignored just as the nation-at-large ignored him socially, politically and humanistically. This author points out that in 1852 George Aiken presented his dramatic version of Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin. It may be said that Aiken cast aside the

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[1] Julia Cline, "Rise of the American State Negro," The Drama Magazine, Vol. 21 (January, 1931), p. 9.

[2] Ibid., p. 9.

moral hysteria, the religious preaching and tiresome heroics under which Mrs. Stowe had almost suffocated her characters, and made an attempt to make her Negroes resemble human beings. But the result is a meager study of types.

The picture is clear. There was Uncle Tom, who apparently had no faults, no malice, no resentment. He became a symbol of the righteous Negro, downtrodden by wicked landowners, yet forgiving them to his last conscious moment. Eliza, the mulatto girl, uses the flowery state diction of her day. She calls on Heaven, "Oh powers of Mercy, protect me," while her husband delivers several bits of English such as, "I am resolved to perish sooner than surrender," and later this cry,"I have no country but the grave!" It may well be that this character, the husband, was the mouthpiece of Mrs. Stowe's anti-slave propaganda, but one feels that he was never a flesh and blood human. Topsy, beloved of several generations, must have been superb comedy relief.[3] And was described as an embodiment of wicked sinfulness, a reprobate for the angelic Miss Ophelia to reform. But even here the author seemingly had to forget her character and remember her uplift.

According to Cline,[4] seven years after the introduction of Uncle Tom, Dion Boucicault, claimed equally by three countries, produced his play, The Octoroon. She makes the point that Boucicault, being a good showman, was greatly concerned with producing a drama equally pleasing

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[3] Ibid., p. 9.

[4] Ibid., p. 10.

to the Abolitionist and the Southern planter. Hence his play also became a piece of propaganda against the institution of slavery, yet portraying the slave-owners sympathetically. He did little for the advancement of the stage Negro other than to give to the Negro servants a more natural dialogue than did his predecessors. One recalls that Zoe, the octoroon, could not necessarily be called the Negro type. Boucicault has her a cultured young woman, raised in a Caucasian home, treated with every courtesy and kindness. One writer says of her "She acts, feels, talks like a white lady of her day, sending many prayers Heaven-ward and sustaining a heroic nobility to the bitter end."[5]

There are some writers who feel that the first thirty years of the twentieth century brought with them a serious recognition of the Negro, a genuine interest in him as a fellow human being, a respect for his native wit and his individualistic characteristics. They feel that drama has shared in this new understanding and has favored the American stage Negro unstintedly. The year 1914 saw a most significant growth. One writer, Julia Cline,[6] cites as an example the Hapgood Players, all Negroes, who were presented in three plays by Ridgely Torrence. She feels that to Mr. Torrence belongs the credit of recognizing the dramatic possibilities of native Negro life. Torrence, she

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[5] Ibid., p. 10.

[6] Ibid., p. 10.

points out, wrote these plays expressly for the Negro theatre and he used American Negroes exclusively in them. Of course when one reads Torrence's Granny Maumee he finds there is a vivid and perhaps artistic portrayal of the lowly Negro woman, Granny, cherishing and fostering a bitter hatred toward the whites who have burned her innocent son at the stake. The author has exploited fully the eeriness of the conjure art. Also, Torrence's The Rider of Dreams is found to be a humerous portrayal of the whimsical, fabricating darkey. One feels that it is unfortunate that World War I cut short the efforts of the Happood Players before the extent of their work could be seen. There is the feeling though that good was accomplished with their venture.

Butcher[7] says that drama by and about Negroes has developed and matured in relationship to the developing and maturing of American drama as a whole.

Mark Van Doren observed that:

> American literature has always been weakest in the department of drama. Until the present generation there has been little dramatic work worth the serious attention of the historian, and there have been few or no playwrights of deserved eminence. Not until 1890 did any arise of even respectable quality, and not until 1915 did talent of a high order enter the field.[8]

Brawley[9] observed that the pioneers in plays of Negro life are

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[7]Margaret Just Butcher, The Negro In American Culture (New York: Alford A. Knopf, 1956), p. 187.

[8]Ibid., p. 187.

[9]Benjamin Brawley, The Negro Genius (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1940), p. 269.

of two sorts. They have been playwrights who wrote plays of Negro life, but were white; and playwrights who wrote plays of Negro life, and who were Negroes.

It seems significant that the pioneers in the development of a native American drama recognized the Negro life and folkways as a potential source of native idioms from which a major contribution to a national drama could be developed.

This statement made by Frederick H. Koch may be of some significance in regards to the importance of the American theatre's renaissance. Koch said of Uncle Tom's Cabin; "A grand old Theatre piece, but its treatment of the southern Negro, though sincere, was sentimental."[10]

In regards to the matter of writing plays, Howard Lindsey[11] observed that the three basic things about playwriting are the organization of the emotions of the audience, story progress, dramatization--and the organization of the emotions of the audience is the most important. He says the first job the playwright has in the theatre is to engage the emotions of the audience favorably towards one or more of the characters. The theatre, he says, is an emotional institution. One comes to hear a story told in terms of acting. An audience wants

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[10] Archibald Henderson (ed.), Pioneering A People's Theatre (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1955), p. 11.

[11] Rosamond Gilder (ed.), Theatre Arts Anthology (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1948), p. 121.

to be emotionally interested in the characters in the story. And they want a reward for their emotions.

Lindsey says the reward can come in one or two ways. It can either come through the satisfaction of having the character they are sympathetically interested in win out over circumstances or other people, he says, or be tragically defeated; but if he is tragically defeated their reward must be a depth of pity and compassion that is satisfying. According to Lindsey, the play that ends in mere frustration for the people in whom the audience is emotionally interested will not satisfy them, for frustration is one of the most unhappy experiences in our lives.

Now in regards to playwrights it seems reasonable to list among the white playwrights of merit Paul Green and Eugene O'Neill. O'Neill's art is progressive, and is a definite part of the Negro's dramatic history. According to Quinn[12] the Emperor Jones marks a progress in O'Neill's art. For it will be remembered, he says, that for this central character he chooses no usual hero, but a Negro Pullman car porter, who has to leave the United States on account of his crimes, which include murder. It is not necessary to recount a story as well known as the Emperor Jones. But it may be pointed out that the Emperor Jones is a drama of human fear; the emotion of terror is a binding force that fuses the scenes into an unforgetable picture of a

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[12]Arthur Hobson Quinn, A History of the American Drama (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1927), p. 173.

human soul fighting against his own evil deeds, the cruel fate of his forefathers, the ignorance of centuries, according to Quinn. Quinn has this to say about this play:

> The Emperor Jones made O'Neill's position secure . . . . shatters conventions and thereby makes for freedom. O'Neill went back to a freer form, he defied the ordinary rules of technique, but he did not violate the fundamental laws of drama. He kept the unity of time; he violated the unity of place; but he substituted a higher unity--that of impression.[13]

A number of writers have pointed out that O'Neill created in this Negro character an individual with something royal in his nature and something pitiful in his hopeless struggle against fate. Quinn and others support the belief that O'Neill emerged as the first dramatist to prove that the American theatre could and would accept the Negro as a subject of serious dramatic treatment.

Many sources point to Paul Green's frequent preoccupation with group problems in his writing. As for example, in the play, In Abraham's Bosom, Green reflects the tragic sturggle of a courageous and enterprising Negro to educate himself--and, in turn, others--in spite of apathy on the part both of his Negro peers and of the whites. One only has to read this play, a Pulitzer Prize winner, to see that it is richly colored by the playwright's sensitive awareness of the group and folk mores that produce the dilemma Abraham cannot possibly resolve.

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[13] Ibid., p. 181.

In this play, as well as in other plays by Green, one can see that Green, an unmistakably serious and sensitive writer, undertook the challenging, complex task of interpreting to the theatre public the Negro as an individual and a human being, liable to the same ideals, aspirations, objectives, and frustrations as any other human being.

Sterling Brown[14] said Eugene O'Neill and Paul Green, as playwrights, did for the Negro what Yeats, Synge, and Lady Gregory did for the Irishman. Brown recalls Yeat's plea for a movement whereby "The reality of the true Irish peasant would drive off the artificial stage Irishman."[15]

The importance and need for playwrights like O'Neill and Green looms large when one considers that there must have been a need for the true Negro to drive off the conventional stage Negro for, with rare exceptions the Negro character in American drama had been rigidly stereotyped from his early sporadic stage appearance until about 1915. Surely these rigid sterotypes of the Negro can be understood in light of the fact the Negro as a character has reflected successive stages of Negro social development. For it is found in much of the literature that in the years between the Revolution and the Civil War, the predominant Negro character types were the comic buffoon and the happy, carefree slave flourishing under benevolent patronage.

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[14]Margaret Butcher, The Negro In American Culture, p. 188.

[15]Ibid., p. 188.

It was Arthur Quinn who said of Paul Green: "The test of the importance of such a movement as the Carolina Playmakers lies, of course, in the development of a creative dramatist. Paul Green seems to be such an artist."[16]

Quinn emphasizes the charm in Green's The No 'Count Boy, a Negro comedy, which won for Green the Belasco Cup when produced in 1925 in New York. It may be remembered that in this play Green dramatizes the philosophy of the attraction of the vagabond. He says that it was natural that Green should turn for sharper contrasts to the Negro, both because of the greater emotional possibilities "in a race that lives by feelings," and because of the tragedies that come from the contact of white and black.

Butcher[17] says the fact that the Negro has long been regarded as a "natural born actor" has caused him to suffer rather than gain by this estimation, for this designation was intended often as a confined estimate of the Negro's limitations, a simultaneous concession to his interpretative dramatic ability, and disparagement of his creative abilities. In short, the Negro was evaluated as a second-rate dramatic talent: he was regarded exclusively as a mimic or clown. This same author advances the idea that the Negro's experience from slavery until the present has been, and is, inherently dramatic. That no minority

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[16]Quinn, A History of the American Drama, p. 243.

[17]Op. Cit., p. 191.

group in America has plumbed greater emotional depths, or passed through more levels of life, or been caught in more social conflict and complication than the Negro. That the essential elemental forces of great drama--epic turns of experience, tragic intensity of life, discipline and refinement of the emotions--have been accumulating for generations and are only now finding mature expression in the dramatic arts. That generations of enforced buffoonery and caracture began to give way to a more realistic interpretation of the Negro folk; and that today, slowly and at times almost inperceptibly, the Negro actor and playwright are functioning and creating for audiences sophisticated enough to recognize the universality of human problems and to concede the neglibility of color per se.

The brief account of the most important use of Negro subject matter by white writers before and during the Negro Renaissance indicates that strides were made away from caricature, burlesque, and defamation. Although some of these authors, because of a predilection for fatalism, failed to attain a well-rounded representation of Negro life, their more unbiased approach to racial themes nevertheless inspired colored writers to replace the self-preening provoked by the ministrel characters with a franker self-criticism and self-revelation. And in regards to this type of writer who failed to attain a well-rounded representation of Negro life, Gloster[18] says for example,

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[18] Hugh M. Gloster, Negro Voices In American Fiction (Chapel-Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1948), p. 108.

Julia Peterkin, DuBose Heyward, and the like, are not very much concerned with tension and conflict. Simple pictures of the comedy and tragedy of South Carolina plantation life are provided in Miss Peterkin's Green Thursday (1924), Black April (1927), Scarlet Sister Mary (1928), and Bright Skin (1932), Gloster notes that convincing depiction of Charleston's Catfish Row is given in Heyward's Porgy (1925) and Mamba's Daughters (1927).

The emergence of this new attitude, which, made art for art's sake rather than art for race's sake the common bonum of Negro creative effort, was preclaimed in 1926 by Langston Hughes when he said:

> We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our individual darkskinned selves without fear or shame . . . . We know we are beautiful, and ugly too. The Tom-Tom cries and the Tom-Tom laughs . . . . We build out temples for tomorrow, strong as we know them, and we stand on top of the mountain, free with ourselves.[19]

This period may be called fatalistic because the underlying principle in Hayward's play Porgy is based upon the assumption that "The flow of life, with its mass rhythm, concerted movements, crowd laughter and the interrelationships of the Negro quarter were larger than any character who moved upon it."[20]

Cline in describing a showing of Porgy said:

> For more than two hours the enchanted spectator was transplanted to Catfish Row. There he spent the summer with

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[19] Ibid., p. 109.

[20] Cline, "Rise Of The American Stage Negro," p. 14.

> its inhabitants. With them he jested, he suffered, he laughed, he wept. A strange tightening of the throat at the beauty of the spirituals, a quickening of the pulse at the age-old conflict of man and the elements, a breadth-taking experience at the sheer joy of color, movement, and a strange feeling that this was not theatre--it was life.[21]

It seems safe to say that the Green Pastures, written by Marc Connelly, and based on Roark Bradford's story Ol' Man Adam and His Chillun is, while composed of quaintly humerous Bible stories interpreted through the mind of an unsophisticated Negro preacher, a mature expression in dramatic art. In this play--especially with Richard B. Harrison heading its first cast--the American stage Negro grew up in the sight of critics and the public.

It may be that the drama of American Negro life is developing because a native American dream is evolving. It seems reasonable that the new interest in Negro folk temperament has meant the rise of a Negro drama and a Negro Theatre. This did not happen without pioneering effort and genius. Among those most responsible are such playwrights as Eugene O'Neill, Ridgley Torrence, Paul Green, DuBose Heyward, and Marc Connelly, whose works have already been mentioned. And Negro playwrights such as Randolph Edmonds, Willis Richardson, Melvin Tolson, James Butcher, Owen Dodson, Thomas Pawley, John M. Ross, Richard Wright, and Lorraine Hansberry, whose recent play, A Raisin In The Sun, was staged in New York, March 22, 1959.

Negro playwrights have pioneered in the theatre field. Early among such playwrights is Willis Richardson. Richardson, as well as

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[21] Ibid., p. 14.

many other Negro playwrights, took as his task to rid the public of its ministrel-show conception of the Negro. In 1919 Richardson indicated the line of his chief interest by a paper in Crisis Magazine entitled "The Hope of a Negro Drama."[22] The main point of this paper was his approach to the problem as indicated above.

Richardson wrote a number of plays, but the play, The Broken Banjo, which won the Spingarn Prize in a contest conducted by Crisis Magazine is considered by many to be a play representative of the early productions. It is a one-act play that tells the story of a Negro woman, her banjo-loving husband, and her good-for-nothing brother and cousin who constantly loiter about the home. The husband objects to the constant feeding of the brother and cousin . . . . .

Brawley[23] points out that there are shortcomings in the play, but says "one can see in it the author's attempts to come to grips with life."

In 1930 Richardson compiled Plays and Pageants From The Life Of The Negro, and five years later he and May Miller were the chief authors of Negro History In Thirteen Plays.

Much of the literature seems to support the feeling that perhaps more promising than the Richardson and Miller productions is the work

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[22]Benjamin Brawley, The Negro Genius, p. 283.

[23]Ibid. p. 283.

of Randolph Edmonds. It seems obvious from his plays that in the course of his climb to get an education Edmonds saw much life in sawmills, railroad camps, and factories; and he seems at the same time a sensative and creative artist. And one might think of it as a tribute to Paul Green that Randolph Edmonds admits that his attention was directed by Paul Green's Lonesome Road to the drama of Negro peasant life.

Randolph Edmonds was born in Lawrenceville, Virginia in 1900. He was educated in the St. Paul Normal and Industrial School of that city and at Oberlin College in Ohio. He received his master's degree from Columbia in 1934 and was awarded a General Education Board Fellowship to study in the Department of Drama at Yale University. Another fellowship, granted by the Rosenwald Fund in 1938, enabled him to study drama organizations in Ireland and Great Britian and to observe the production methods of the Abbey Theatre in Dublin. Edmonds is the author of two books: Shades and Shadows, six imaginative stories in dramatic form, and Six Plays For a Negro Theatre, a book of folk plays. Also, Edmonds has been an important figure in the Negro Little Theatre Movement.

In the preface to his book, Six Plays For a Negro Theatre, Edmonds has this to say:

> This volume of plays is intended primarily for use in the Negro Little Theatres, where there has been for many years a great need for plays of Negro life written by Negroes. It is hoped, of course, that they will find their way into the

repertory of other groups as well; for if plays are really worthwhile, they ought to contain some universal elements that will rise above the narrow confines of the nation or race of the cast of characters.[24]

Brawley points out that when some objections were raised against the dialect drama written by Edmonds the author said:

I am fully aware of the fact that there are many Negroes who do not like dialect plays. It has long been my opinion, however, that it is not the crude expressions of the peasant characters that contribute to this dislike, but rather the repelling atmosphere and the "psychology of the inferior" that somehow creep into the peasant plays of even the most unbiased authors of other racial groups . . . . In these plays I have made an attempt to meet most of the unusual objections raised against the dialect dramas with a combination of four elements . . . . They are: Worthwhile themes, sharply drawn conflict, positive characters, and a melodramatic plot.[25]

Edmonds says further in defense of his dialect dramas:

It is hoped that a combination of these elements has resulted, on the negative side, in tragedies that are not too revolting in theme, and not too subtle and psychological in their action and exposition. On the positive side, the central characters have courage and conviction, and they fight heroically in their losing struggles. The melodramatic element is designed to make them dramatic enough to be understood and appreciated by the average audience rather than the sophisticated theatre-goer.[26]

Another playwright who has been closely associated with Randolph Edmonds in the movement to develop a functional educational theatre and a Negro Little Theatre is Melvin B. Tolson.

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[24]Randolph Edmonds, Six Plays For a Negro Theatre (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1934), p. 7.

[25]Op. Cit., p. 285.

[26]Op. Cit., p. 285.

Melvin Tolson was born (1908-) at Moberly, Missouri. He was educated in the public schools of Kansas and Missouri. He took his A. B. degree at Lincoln University and his M. A. degree at Columbia. Many sources support the fact that Melvin Tolson has been the recipient of numberous prizes and awards for speech and creative literature. He is the author of two full-length plays: Southern Front, which deals with the unionizing of the Arkansas sharecroppers, and The Moses of Beale Street, a Negro miracle play. In addition, his poem, Dark Symphony, won the national poetry prize at the Negro American Exposition in Chicago.

This playwright, Melvin Tolson, has been outstanding in the development of one of the Negro Dramatic organizations. He is a pioneer in the Negro Educational Theatre mainly because of his work with his Log Cabin Theatre while a professor at Wiley College in Marshal, Texas. He went subsequently to Langston University in Oklahoma where his pioneering spirit and work continue.

James Butcher is prominent among the Negro pioneer playwrights. He was born (1909-) in Washington, D. C. and educated in the public schools of that city. He took his A. B. degree at the University of Illinois, although before that time he had attended Howard University. Butcher received this degree in 1932. He received the M. A. degree from the State University of Iowa in 1941. There are accounts of Butcher having been outstanding as an actor at Iowa and later with

the Morningside Players of Columbia University. Also, he taught for several summers at Atlanta University's Summer School of the Theatre; and there is a good bit said about the fact that he helped to organize and directed the Negro Repertory Theatre in Washington. Butcher wrote several plays, but his best efforts seem to have been accomplished in a one-act play, The Seer. In addition, James Butcher has been prominently associated with the Negro Little Theatre movement at Howard University, in cooperation with several other outstanding directors.

Owen Dodson (1914-), prominent as a young pioneer in the Negro Theatre movement, is another playwright of some generous mention. He was born in Brooklyn, New York. Owen Dodson received his college training and his Master of Fine Arts at Bates College and Yale University respectively. His plays have had considerable showings. They have been performed in the little theatre groups at Brooklyn College, Howard University, and Atlanta University. Prominent mention is made in the literature of the fact that two of Dodson's plays, Divine Comedy and Garden of Time were given as major productions at Yale University. He has taught drama courses at Howard University and Spelman College. His Divine Comedy is the first play to exploit the dramatic possibilities of the Father Divine Movement in Harlem. Brown says "It is as yet, one of the few poetic dramas produced by an American Negro."[27]

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[27]Sterling Brown, Negro Caravan (New York: The Dryden Press, 1940), p. 543.

Thomas Pawley (1917-) is another Negro playwright who is worthy of mention. He is a native of Jackson, Mississippi and was educated at Virginia State College, as an undergraduate. Pawley later received the Master of Arts and the Doctor of Philosophy degrees at the State University of Iowa. He wrote Jedgement Day, Smokey, Freedom In My Soul, and Son of Liberty. It seems quite an accomplishment that Pawley wrote all of these plays in the same year, 1938. The play which seems to have added most to his statue as a playwright is Jedgement Day. Thomas Pawley, as it will be seen later in another chapter, has been an important force in the development of the educational theatre and the Negro Little Theatre movement.

John M. Ross' plays Wonga Doll, The Purple Lily and Half Caste Moon have done much to establish him as a promising playwright among Negro educational theatre groups. Ross ' plays have been featured prominently at Fisk University, where he was an outstanding figure in the Negro Little Theatre movement for several years; at Talladega College and at Arkansas Agricultural, Mechaical and Normal College where he is still pioneering in the educational theatre movement. Accounts of Ross' undergraduate education at the public school level were not available, but he received the A. B. degree from Morehouse College and the M. A. from Yale. It is said that John Ross, having been born in the shadows of Yale University, grew up in the college theatre like many kids grow up on the college athletic field. And, while Yale University has produced several outstanding Negro directors and playwrights, John

Ross was the first to attend the School of Theatre and to earn the Master of Fine Arts degree. In addition to his playwriting Ross' other experiences seem to have been varied. As a director and technical consultant he served with the Atlanta University Players, the Fisk Stagecrafters, the Woodmont Summer Theatre, the Hampton Institute Theatre Workshop. He has been sought as an authority on stage lighting and has to his credit a textbook on stage lighting. His Wonga Doll, framing the rich folk materials of Louisiana, is his most successful play.

Butcher[28] says two questions apropos the Negro and drama are: Why do we have so few Negro playwrights? What, if any, are the problems peculiar to the Negro playwright? She says one answer is that a playwright, like a novelist, finds it difficult to take an objective attitude about something in which he is emotionally involved. To be a part of any situation or set of circumstances, he has to know it intimately. But the playwright, beyond this intimate knowledge, must acquire a perspective on the situation or set of circumstances he proposes to project into a drama. The small number of writers just mentioned above have all admitted either through personal contact with them or in their writings that without a proper perspective they cannot possibly express themselves objectively or powerfully. But it is felt that this psychological handicap is being overcome by the Negro playwright as he acquires wider experience.

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[28]Margaret Butcher, The Negro In American Culture, p. 205.

It is possible that a second reason we have so few Negro playwrights might be termed the sociological handicap. Until quite recently the Negro has had little intimate contact with the technical side of the legitimate stage. One knows that a knowledge of practical craftsmanship must be had; and that continuous contact with the stage is necessary for background information. And that only occasionally on the stage as an actor, the Negro playwright has had no opportunity to learn the practical craftsmanship that can be acquired solely by continuous contact with the stage. With this in mind, one can agree with Butcher that "This is the reason why amateur Negro repertory groups remain so important for aspiring Negro actors and playwrights."[29]

Another writer of some considerable statue is Richard Wright. His Native Son is his most outstanding work. The play first appeared in fiction in 1940. It was a best seller and a Book-of-the-Month Club selection. This piece of fiction was converted into a drama through the collaboration of Wright and Paul Green of the University of North Carolina, and subsequently staged under the direction of Orsen Welles. Native Son lasted fourteen weeks on Broadway before closing with a short run at the Apollo Theatre in Harlem.

As a successful and influential author, presumably, Wright focuses attention upon the warping and stunting effect of racial discrimination and economic oppression upon the down trodden and underprivileged

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[29]Ibid., p. 205.

classes of the United States, and blames brutal and prejudiced whites as well as complacent and cowardly blacks for much Negro crime and delinquency.

Gloster[30] calls Native Son the most perdurable and influential novel (and play) yet written by an American Negro, but says it is at the same time one of the masterpieces of modern proletarian fiction. He notes that Wright takes as his leading character a traditional . . . stereotype usually accepted as a representative Negro by misinformed whites and frequently viewed with nausea by supercilious blacks, and seeks to show that the individual's delinquency is produced by a distorting environment rather than by innate criminality. It is Gloster's feeling that Native Son may rightly be regarded as a most significant probing of the plight of the lower-class northern urban Negro in contemporary American literature. This is felt to be a fully realized story of unfortunates, uncompromisingly realistic, and quite as human as it is Negro. Richard Wright in Native Son is felt to be a generally realistic analyist and thoughtful interpreter of social ills and, is considered by Gloster to be the sensitive painter and perspicacious spokesman of the inarticulate black millions of this country.

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[30]Hugh M. Gloster, Negro Voices In American Fiction, p. 233.

In an article on "How Bigger Was Born"[31] Wright confessedly dug deep in his experience and compounded a symptomatic here chiefly out of five social misfits that he had earlier known. The first, he says, was a young bully who terrorized the boys of Jackson, Mississippi; the second, about seventeen years of age, showed resentment for the ruling class of the South by refusing to pay for his food, clothing, and housing; the third . . . bluffed his way for a while but was shot fatally during a prohibition-era liquor raid; the fourth, who smarted under segregation and discrimination in the South, finally lost his mind and was remanded to an institution for the insane; and the fifth, whose fate was unknown but easy to imagine, took spirited delight in riding the white sections of Jim-Crow street cars and defying conductors to move him. These five disjointed and maladjusted personalities were worked over by Wright's creative imagination until a synthetic character, Bigger Thomas of Native Son, emerged.

Considering his twisted and deprived here in relation to the ideology of the labor movement and revolutionary politics, Wright observed that Bigger Thomases were white as well as black and that there were millions of young men with a similarly conditioned outlook in the various nations of the world. He said:

> More than anything else, as a writer, I was fascinated by the similarity of the emotional tensions of Bigger in America and Bigger in Nazi Germany and Bigger in old Russia.

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[31]Richard Wright, "How Bigger Was Born," The Saturday Review of Literature, Vol. XXII (1940), p. 20.

> All Bigger Thomases, white and black, felt tense, afraid, nervous, histerical, and restless.

Thinking in terms of the Bigger of the United States, Wright determined--regardless of anticipated deprecations from prejudiced Nordics, misunderstanding Communists, and bourgeois Negroes--to exemplify in his hero "A symbolic figure of American life, a figure who would hold within him the prophecy of our future." He says then, in using the title Native Son he sought "To show that Bigger Thomas is an authentic American, not imported from Moscow or anywhere."

It is noticeable that as the background for Bigger Thomas' activities, Wright discards the South for the "black ghetto" of Chicago, the sprawling and opulent Metropolis of the Mid-west. Wright, it seems, reflected that this high-powered urban environment with all its glitter and allurement operating unceasingly "through the newspapers, magazines, radios, movies, and the mere imposing sight and sound of daily American life"--would cause Bigger, "estranged from the religion and folk-culture of his race," to revolt even more furiously than he would in the South upon realizing that the full enjoyment of this stimulating scene was hollow mockery and utter impossibility for him. Wright points out that Bigger, having deep-seated yearnings to be an aviator and to participate in weighty military and diplomatic matters, can enter these spheres of life only through ineffectual games of make-believe. His daily experience brings segregation, insult, mistreatment, and injury. Stirred by racial ostricism, he caustically says:

> Everytime I think about it I feel like somebody's poking a red-hot iron down my throat. . . . look! We live here and

> they live there. We black and they white. They got things and we ain't. They do things and we can't. It's jist like living in jail. Half the time I feel like I'm on the outside of the world peeping in through a knot-hole in the fence.

The author says with thoughts like these surging through his mind, Bigger is bored and discontented with his humdrum existence of reading cheap magazines, going to movies, frequenting pool rooms, participating in petty robberies,,laughing and talking with the gang, visiting his girl, or just spending time in idleness. And that in this provocative Chicago environment, then, much more than the South, Bigger is ready for any risky adjustment that a neurotic individual--twisted by race, poverty, and family disorganization--can make to safeguard or better his condition.

Finally, one feels that Wright wants one to get the picture from this play that the all-pervading thought of Native Son is that a prejudiced and capitalistic social order, rather than any intrinsic human deficiency, is the cause of the frustration and rebellion of underprivileged Negro youth of America. Attention is focused upon the paradoxical policy of Dalton, who contributes heavily to Negro education and simultaneously hems colored Chicagoans in a rotting slum area. Mention is made of the distrust of the Negro for real sympathy and understanding offered by well-intending white people. In Bigger's mother is typified the old-fashioned Negro's willingness to endure the trials and privations of this life because of the prospect of eternal happiness in the hereafter. One might get the feeling from this play that Wright, with the help of Paul Green, did come pretty

close to expressing himself powerfully if not completely objectively.

The most recent play to come to attention is A Raisin In The Sun.[32] Lorraine Hansberry is the young author.

The account of Miss Hansberry's play that appeared in the State-Times was by William Glover of the Associated Press. He said that the result of this play was a spectacular Broadway success and was "Named by the Drama Critics Circle as the season's best American play." Glover said that newcomer Lorraine's simple, warm story of a Negro family in Chicago triumphed over works of such notables as Eugene O'Neill, Archibald MasLeish and Tennessee Williams.

It was noted that the 28-year old playwright fervently wrote "A Raisin In The Sun to express "something about American life in general" beyond race and color. Miss Hansberry said when interviewed about the play, "People can get pretty messed up, and they can also be pretty nice. I think the human race is obviously worth saving, ridiculous as it can be, and that probably we have the stamina to fight for our survival if we can just stop talking about how hopeless we all are."

Lorraine Hansberry, energetic and articulate, grew up on Chicago's South Side, daughter of a prosperous Negro real estate broker. The review says that the events in her prize play resemble her own life only in the person of the drama's outspoken off-beat college girl, Beneatha. Also, in her interview she is reputed to have said, one

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[32] State-Times, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, (March, 23, 1959)

night seeing a play, "I suddenly became disgusted with the whole body of material about Negroes and determined to write a social drama about Negroes that will be good art."

It seems that this young writer grew up with the aspirations to be a painter, studying at Chicago's Art Institute, the University of Wisconsin and the University of Guadalajara in Mexico. She did a little work with a small theatre group in Chicago, and took some courses at Roosevelt College. In 1950 she headed for New York. Up to the point of this play, her only literary effort was a high school essay that won two tickets to a football game. When discussing her play, Miss Hansberry says: "I didn't have to change dialogue much, but constantly revised the structure." She said, "Boy, if plays didn't have to make sense I'd be a genius."

Kerr of the Herald Tribune said of the play:

> An impressive play beautifully acted. Aumulative swell of emotion reaches back over the evening to surround, and bind up, an honest, intelligible and moving experience . . . . Mr. Poitier is superb. [33]

Chapman of the News said:

> A beautiful, lovable play. It is affectionately human, funny and touching. Shows us what the theatre should be at its best. The acting company, under the direction of Lloyd Richards, is flawless. A work of theatrical magic.[34]

Atkinson of the New York Times said:

> Miss Hansberry has a wide range of topics to write about--some of them hilarious, some of them painful in the extreme.

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[33] New York Times (Sunday, March 22, 1959)

[34] Ibid.

> Lloyd Richards has directed a bold and stirring performance. Likely to destroy the complacency of anyone who sees it. Mr. Poitier is a remarkable actor with enormous power. Claudia McNeil gives a heroic performance.[35]

Aston of the World Telegram said:

> The number of tears shed by presumably worldly first nighters must have set a new record at the Ethel Barrymore last evening. They dropped in tribute to Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin In The Sun. It may rip you to shreds. It will make you proud of being human.[36]

Now to talk about pioneering actors and actresses. The small outlet for this group is in general the professional stage. First, among the early actors are Charles Gilpin (1872-1930), Richard B. Harrison (1884-1935), and Rose McClendon (1884-1936). It may well be assumed that the successes or the failures, as the case may be, of these actors and actresses are vital reasons for the development of the Educational theatre in the Negro college and university and the movements toward a Negro Little Theatre.

There is a tremendous amount of literature written about Charles Gilpin. It is said that Gilpin, playing the Emperor Jones at the Provincetown Playhouse, New York, November 3, 1920, made stage history, not only for the Negro but for the country. It happened that after the first performance--the play ran for months--Alexander Woolcott said of the producers in the New York Times:

> They have acquired an actor, one who has it in him to evoke the pity and terror and the indescribable foreboding

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[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

which are part of the secret of the Emperor Jones.[37]

About Gilpin and this performance one writer says:

> After years of striving and waiting--such years as sometimes defeat even a strong man--he triumphed, with a brief day of success and applause. Even then came the question, "What next?" There was no tomorrow; never again came such an opportunity. Yet he had done his work. A torch-bearer, he not only helped to organize the companies that were to play a part in the new day, but at one bound bridged the chasm between popular comedy and the legitimate drama.[38]

One can not dispell the feeling that this role as played by Charles Gilpin was perhaps the first major opportunity for audiences to see a Negro actor doing something other than the cliche role of the shuffling Negro servant.

For Richard B. Harrison the play was The Green Pastures. For a large number of people what comes next is stage history. The Green Pastures with Richard B. Harrison in the title role is said to have thrilled New York as that city had not been thrilled in years. It seems that in addition to its dramatic appeal, the play made for good feelings. This quote was found which seems to have been made after the first performance of the show:

> On Broadway I went to see a show, and I saw a God.[39]

Franklin P. Adams of the New York World wrote:

> It stirred and moved me more than any play I can remember to have seen.[40]

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[37]Benjamin Brawley, The Negro Genius, p. 288.

[38]Ibid., p. 289.

[39]Ibid., p. 292.

[40]Ibid., p. 292.

Brawley writes that after its first three months of showing, the play was awarded the Pulitzer Prize. The next year Harrison himself received the Spingarn Medal. He played "De Lawd" for five years, it seems, without missing a performance. He had played a total of 1,657 times when he was tricken in New York just before the matinee on Saturday, March 2, 1935.

Charles Winter Wood, former Tuskegee and Bennett College professor of speech and drama and an associate of the National Playground and Recreational Association, succeeded to the role of "De Lawd" when Richard B. Harrison, who had played the part for five years, suffered a breakdown in his dressing room at the Forty-Fourth Street Theatre in New York just before the matinee performance. It is reported that Harrison said to Charles Winter Wood, "Hold me up, Charlie, hold me up" as he grasped his understudy for support. "The world needs this play at this time, I'll be back in a few days." Wood is said to have answered, "I'll do my best, Dick." and he took over the role that Richard B. Harrison relinquished for all time with his death.

That one of the most famous novel roles in American stage history, one feels, fell into competent hands with the succession of Charles Winter Wood to the part of "De Lawd" is evid enced by the following comment by Brooks Atkinson of the New York Times, after witnessing the understudy's portrayal:

> The Lawd should have no m sgivings, for his part in The Green Pastures has fallen into reverent hands. After filling the understudy's post in the wings for five years, Charles Winter Wood stepped into the great part on that

> ominous afternoon of March 2 when Richard B. Harrison collapsed in his dressing room. Now that Mr. Harrison has gone to a good man's reward, Mr. Wood is regularly responding to the most stirring entrance cue in modern dramatic literature, and he is playing the role like a man who respects the destiny that has descended on him . . . . To lovers of the play it is comforting to realize that the role has gone to a man who respects its high tradition.[41]

It might be said of Charles Winter Wood, since the information is available about him, that he was born in Nashville, Tennessee. His father was a Methodist Minister. The family moved to Chicago when he was nine years old. One finds that it was in Chicago that he met Richard B. Harrison. Both boys were in their 'teens. They were fast friends thereafter.

As a youngster growing up, Charles Winter Wood did odd jobs--as most boys do--, one of which was blacking shoes. He then took to the stage, and was the first Negro in America to produce a Shakespearan play with a professional Negro company. The work was Richard III, and he played the title role.

After two and a half years on the stage, Mr. Wood went to Beliot College in Wisconsin to complete his education. After graduating there he went as a teacher to Tuskegee Institute. Ten years later he won a Rockefeller scholarship. He went to Columbia University, where he studied under Dr. Nicholas Murry Butler and received the M. A. degree.

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[41] Souvenir Program (Nashville, Tennessee: Tennessee State College, 1946)

Then he returned to teach English, dramatics and public speaking at Tuskegee and it was there he was teaching when asked to understudy the role of "De Lawd" just after the opening of The Green Pastures at the Mansfield Theatre, New York, in February, 1930.

Charles Winter Wood was made a life member of the American University Club of New York, in recognition of his unique contribution to education and dramatic development among Negroes . . . . When The Green Pastures had had its run and folded, it seems that Mr. Charles Winter Wood went to Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College to teach English, dramatics and speech.

It was found that Rose McClendon was featured in such plays as Justice in 1919; Deep River 1926; In Abraham's Bosom 1926. It seems that one of Miss McClendon's outstanding accomplishments was that she led in organizing the Negro People's Theatre in 1935, which after a summer of successful effort was incorporated in the Federal Theatre Project, of which she became director.

In speaking of the Federal Theatre, one recalls to mind this shrewd pleasantry by Dick Campbell, in an address delivered at the April, 1946 Conference of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. He said:

> Before the war (World War II) years plagued us, there was no interest manifested by social workers, civic leaders or whatnots in the fate of Negro people employed in any catergory of the entertainment field . . . . They could work a week and starve for a month and nobody cared a hoot! They could die and be buried by donations of other hungry actors and not one civic or charitable organization showed the slightest concern . . . .

> It was evident during the depression years however that a change was in progress when lawyer, teacher, preacher, actor, singer, dancer and all American people were forced through circumstances, to fight for security, and when "home relief" and WPA provided the salvation of doctor, lawyer and Indian chief, it was then that the great leveling process began. WPA Negro theatre became "fashionable." The government-endowed Negro Thespians moved up "above the salt" in the eyes of former self-appointed critics, for one and all were graciously" . . . FDR" for government dole in the form of relief jobs.[42]

Now it seems that the quality of the work that made Rose McClendon the distinguished artist that she was came when she appeared in Deep River.

There is this account of her by Alexander Woolcott of the World Telegram when she appeared in Deep River:

> When Deep River was having its trial night in Philadelphia Ethel Barrymore slipped in to snatch what moments she could of it. "Stay 'til the last act if you can," Arthur Hopkins whispered to her, "And watch Rose McClendon come down these stairs. She can teach some of our most hoity-toity actresses distinction." It was Miss Barrymore who hunted him up after the performance to say, "She can teach them all distinction."[43]

In many respects it may be assumed that the work done on the stage by Charles Gilpin, Richard B. Harrison, Charles Winter Wood, and Miss McClendon certainly was needed, for there was a general need for the true Negro to drive off the conventional stage Negro. For, with rare exceptions, it was found that the Negro character in American drama had been rigidly stereotyped from his early sporadic

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[42] Dick Campbell, "There is Confusion," SADSA Encore (April, 1948), p. 7.

[43] Benjamin Brawley, The Negro Genius, p. 294.

stage appearances until about 1915. These rigid stereotypes of the Negro can be understood in light of the fact that the Negro as a character has reflected successive stages of Negro social development. Also, as it was pointed out earlier in this study, in the years between the Revolution and the Civil War, the predominant Negro character types were the comic baffoon and the happy, carefree slave flourishing under benevolent patronage. And, because these two types were most representative of Negro character and general social maturity for the period, they were rarely abandoned. Butcher says "That the Negro was subtle enough or sophisticated enough to assume the guise of the jester or the complacent ward of a slave society apparently never occurred to early delineators of American Society or Negro members of it."[44] This figures, as it was found that for decade after decade the Negro character was synonymous with comic relief, diverting antics, crude dialect, and grotesque appearance, either physically or in terms of costume. Other types were being perpetuated simultaneously.

Thomas Poag made a statement that may serve very well the purpose of this section at this point. He said:

> The new challenge for our playwrights during the last half century has been to make a conscious effort to portray Negro characters that are universal, representative, and human; and to select themes of high value, universality, dignity, and power. With this new combination of real and repre-

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[44]Margaret Butcher, The Negro In American Culture, p. 183.

> sentative character creations and lofty and human themes the stereotypes will melt away into insignificances as snow before the light of the sun.
>
> Negro audiences and liberal minded white people are demanding that such Negro characters as Uncle Tom, the mammy, the black-faced comedian or clown, the tragic mulatto, the over-sexed female, or vampire, the sweet man, the shiftless Negro servant, the dialect-speaking preacher or elder, the happy-go-lucky male, the superstitious male or female . . . the contented slave, the sretched freedman, be de-emphasized in our theatre.[45]

Also, at this point, a statement made by Sterling Brown seems significant. Brown said:

> There has been a dearth of little theatre groups among Negroes. Most of these amateurs or semiprofessional groups have been well disposed toward Negro playwrights. But it seems they have been poor in purse. With the death of the Federal Theatre projects the Negro playwright's opportunities for genuine apprenticeship in his craft and for professional productions dwidled.[46]

One medium which has made some use of the Negro actor's talents is the TV. It is not the purpose of this study to go too deeply into that phase of acting. But for the purpose of this section it can be emphasized that an all Negro cast appeared on TV March 23, 1959, for the second time, in Marc Connelly's Green Pastures. With the interest that was shown in this production--it was shown for the first time to TV audiences October 17, 1957 under the sponsorship of the Hallmark

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[45]Thomas E. Poag, "Better Human Relations Through The Medium of Dramatic Art," SADSA Encore (Spring, 1951), p. 29.

[46]Sterling Brown, Negro Caravan, p. 504.

Greeting Card Company--it seems safe to say that the Green Pastures has shown itself to be of considerable interest to many.

According to the review in the New York Times, on this occasion, this second performance on live Television over channel 4 was "A presentation of rare beauty, inspiration and warm humor, one of the treasures of the home medium."[47] The cast was composed of William Warfield, as The Lord; Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, as Noah; Frederick O'Neal, as Moses and Earle Hyman as Hezgrel. The review said that William Warfield "Was a figure of tremendous compassion and dignity as The Lord: this appreciation of the weaknesses of the people on earth was couched in an understanding that was totally absorbing."[48] It was said that Eddie Anderson gave a wonderfully diverting interpretation of Hoah; that O'Neal was powerful as Moses; and that Earle Hyman was convincingly forceful in his role. Also, considerable review space of a commendable nature was given to the little cherubs, the sound of the spirituals and the cumulative sense of the dedication, which served to help make that performance of The Green Pastures an enriching contribution.

Now to speak briefly about acting in general, whether on the stage,

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[47] New York Times (March 24, 1959), TV Section

[48] Ibid.

in the movies or on TV, one finds it easy to agree with a fairly recent point of view on this whole subject. Marjorie L. Dycke[49] made the point that for a long time now, the cliche role of the shuffling Negro servant has been out of the picture. In fact, she says, Negroes are rarely cast as servants at all. And she makes the point that, in the recent picture, The Bad Seed, Leroy, the handyman, could as easily have been played by a Negro but was cast as white. Then she makes the point that "This social blessing has proved to be an economic curse," she says, "Negroes ask only that they not be offered servant roles exclusively. They haven't asked to be cut out of the market altogether; but this is what has actually happened, whether it has been caused by directors not thinking of Negroes for any part not specifically written for a Negro or whether a higher motive has been involved."[50] The author makes the comment that since it is simpler to stop practices than to institute them, there has been no strong compensatory move as yet in professional theatre to employ Negroes in other types of roles. But that this, she says, "We shall have to do in educational theatre."[51] Miss Dycke's emphasis here is on the point that with desegration now accomplished in many areas and on the way in others, many educational

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[49]Marjorie L. Dycke, "The Negro Actor and Desegration," AETA Journal Vol. XI, No. 1 (March, 1959), p. 17.

[50]Ibid., p. 17.

[51]Ibid., p. 17.

institutions are now facing, for the first time, the question of interracial or mixed casting in plays. This, she says, is just one or more in the series of problems which every educational theatre director takes on with his job.

One remembers with Miss Dycke that few plays written today or in the past lend themselves to the kind of mixed casting which does justice to the talented Negro actor in a cast predominately white. Roles can be found for him, it is true, but because of the societal picture presented on the stage--and this is the author's point--the available parts are very often not the ones which use the full scope of his talents.

An instance is mentioned where one off-Broadway group tried for a short time casting Negro and white actors according to talent only and without regard to the situation in society. This proved unpopular with both Negroes and whites.

Of course, as was mentioned, there is always the possibility of a white makeup and a wig for your potential, Hamlet. Canada Lee, it may be remembered, used white-face in The Duchess of Malfi, playing Bosota to Elizabeth Bergner's Duchess. Here two issues are involved: (a) the desirability of whiteface and blackface makeup; (b) the circumstances under which the decision must be made, e.g. Bosola has no close relatives and no love interest in the play: Hamlet has both.

The thesis play has its place, too. But one feels that Marjorie Dycke at least makes a point when she says, as to thesis plays selling

a specific point of view on a sensational interracial problem, these, like most thesis plays on Broadway, are rarely successful at the box office. The indirect approach has fared better, she says, as in South Pacific, Member of The Wedding, and No Time For Sergeants.

The opinion that the educational theatre, too, will get a wider and more willing audience through persuasion rather than aggression, through giving insights into the real and the typical, rather than through exploiting the unusual and the sensational is felt to have validity.

The thesis of the very timely article written by Miss Dycke is centered in these points: That desegration demands of the threatre--educational and professional--new plays written for mixed casts in which Negroes and whites can use their own reality instead of pretending that reality does not exist; Negroes can and should play parts in which race makes no difference or in which such casting adds a new and interesting dimension, as for example, Mr. and Mrs. Daigle in The Bad Seed; but there should be more parts provided specifically for Negroes to play in their day-by-day relations in an American setting--not just for the sake of actors but mainly for the sake of society.

Also, desegration demands, according to this thesis, production lists of good plays suitable for mixed casts; it calls for knowledge of makeup techniques for Negro actors and lack of self-consciousness in handling of this distinction in makeup classes; it asks for self-examination on the part of white faculty members in regard to their own attitudes toward and relations with Negroes . . .

Many will probably agree that most of what happens in educational theatre will depend on the theatre director: his good will, good sense, taste, knowledge, imagination, rapport with the students, faculty, and administration, and his prestige in the community.

Now, at a point where opportunities for genuine apprenticeship in playwriting and acting seem to have dwindled, it seems timely to place some emphasis on a statement made by Randolph Edmonds. He said: "The hope of the genuine Negro theatre is to be found in the organizational approach of the associations of Negro Colleges."[52]

Up to now this chapter has emphasized the Negro's limited participation or lack of it in the theatre--especially professional theatre. The brief emphasis now is to be placed on the Negro Dramatic Organizations as a possible outlet for fuller participation for the Negro playwright and actor--especially in the educational theatre. That, it seems, is the point of Edmonds' prediction.

Contributions of Negro Dramatic Organizations. According to Halstead and Behringer[53], the Negro educational theatre organizations were faculty-inspired, but as they developed, they included students as an integral part of the groups. To understand the struggle for existence and the educational contributions of the Negro organizations, it is

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[52]Brown, Negro Caravan, p. 504.

[53]William P. Halstead and Clara Behringer, "National Theatre Organizations and Theatre Education," A History of Speech Education in America (Karl Wallace, ed., New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954), p. 647.

necessary to examine briefly the place of theatre activity in the Negro colleges. It is recorded[54] that in these colleges dramatics began slowly, but after World War I, two developments outside the educational picture furnished impetus to the school theatre. First, Negro little theatre groups in larger cities gained recognition. Second, prominent dramatists turned out widely acclaimed and commercially successful plays which presented Negro life and problems sympathetically. That in general has already been mentioned. During the twenties and thirties, dramatic organizations mushroomed in colleges for Negroes. These dramatic clubs prepared the way for the gradual inclusion of theatre courses in the curriculum.

It may be said from authority[55] that the aim of the first Negro educational theatre association--The Negro Intercollegiate Dramatic Association--was to encourage the study of the drama and especially to use the college organizations as laboratories for the production of plays and the study of Negro folk material. This association was organized in March, 1930, in Baltimore by representatives of Howard University, Hampton Institute, Morgan College, Virginia Union University, and the Virginia State College. Each year there was a tournament of one-act plays with one of the five institutions acting as host. In the first tournament, held at Morgan College in 1931, Hampton Institute was the winner with Paul Green's The No 'Count Boy.

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[54] Ibid., p. 648.

[55] Op. Cit., p. 504.

In the second and fourth tournaments Morgan College was the winner with two of the plays written by Randolph Edmonds, Bad Man and Nat Turner.

Representatives from Howard, Hampton, Virginia Union, and Virginia State constituted the charter membership of this Negro Intercollegiate Dramatic Association. Delegates elected Randolph Edmonds to the presidency, an office Edmonds retained for five years. In fact it was the efforts of this man, Randolph Edmonds, which provided the stimulus for the organization of this Negro dramatic association.

It is revealed also that several college organizations applied for membership in the association each year, but growth was slow. The association required that the member groups exchange plays, and distances between schools often prevented such exchanges. After seven years the membership list included only ten schools. The association held annual conferences until World War II caused suspension of the meetings. The president at that time, J. Newton Hill of Virginia State, worked to keep the organization alive, and in 1946 regular meetings were resumed with one held at Bennet College.

And Randolph Edmonds, having removed to Dillard University at New Orleans, founded the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts for schools of the southern area. It is recorded[56] that nineteen colleges and one community theatre responded to Edmonds' call for a meeting at Dillard University, February 26-27, 1936. Permanent organization was not attempted until the 1937 meeting at Florida Agri-

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[56] Ibid., p. 648.

culture and Mechanical College.[57] The charter member list included: Alabama State, Alcorn, Lane, LeMoyne, Morehouse, Morris Brown, Prairie View, Shorter, Spelman, Talledega, Wiley, and Winston Salem State Teachers Colleges; Atlanta, Dillard, and Fisk Universities; and Tuskegee Institute. Edmonds was elected president of this organization.

The records show[58] that it was the next year that the organization divided into three geographical units--southwestern, south central, and southeastern--to promote more frequent and closer contacts among members.

As the associations thrived in importance, drama on the college campuses thrived. At Atlanta University a thriving theatre was directed by Anne Cooke, who later went to Hampton, John Ross at Fisk University, with his background from Yale, and Fannin Belcher, at Virginia State College, brought a high degree of technical training to their work of instruction in dramatic art.[59]

It may be of some value to mention that some members of the two Negro drama organizations have suggested on various occasions a merger of the groups. A committee from the SADSA appointed in 1949 to investigate the suggestion recommended cooperation and interchange of materials between the organizations but opposed the merger. The committee believed, it seems, that neither group yet desired affilia-

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[57] Ibid., p. 648

[58] Ibid., p. 649.

[59] Sterling Brown, Op. Cit., p. 504.

tion and that each organization had a clear geographical function. The committee further pointed out that the SADSA planned to work itself out of existence as the Negro becomes integrated into American life. A merger was held to be inimical to that goal.

It should be emphasized that although the two organizations remain separate they share some ot the same goals. For instance, the need for a system of play exchanges and contact among directors; the desire to raise the standards of production; and the hope of hastening the inclusion of theatre courses in curricular, motivated the founding of both associations. These objectives, however, were but the immediate and concrete expression of a broader vision and aim. Edmonds, it seems, saw that almost every major area of study in the schools had its professional organization; specificially he noted that athletics had not attained its prominence through isolated intramural programs. To him it obviously followed that an intercollegiate association might stimulate interest in theatre. Further, one finds, Edmonds noted that as a result of shifting interest and personnel, few of the many community theatres which sprang up from time to time managed to achieve permanence. The stability and hardiness of college educational programs suggested that in this field might lie the hope of a continuing Negro theatre.

It seems safe to assume that the two organizations, working separately but cooperatively, have contributed in large measure to the welfare of educational theatre in Negro colleges; that they stimulated activity

which resulted in increased production; provided for interchange of ideas among directors; and supplied laboratory experience that resulted in improvement and standards.

Finally, one sees one man as the symbol of organization in the two situations. Randolph Edmonds, as professor of English and director of dramatics at Morgan College in Baltimore, Maryland, was the founder and first president of the Inter-Collegiate Drama Association; and when he left Morgan in 1935, and became professor of drama at Dillard University in New Orleans, he organized the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. The charter members and representatives of the colleges and universities that met at Dillard in 1936 elected Edmonds as the first president of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. The writer feels it timely to leave the general aspect of both organizations and to deal with the specific development of one of the organizations. Randolph Edmonds, the symbol of the movement and development in educational theatre in Negro colleges and universities is as yet, a potent force in the SADSA (The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts since 1951) For this reason the writer elects now to survey and record the historical development of The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. This organization will be treated in the next three chapters.

CHAPTER III

THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF DRAMATIC AND SPEECH ARTS

Founding and First Two Years

The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts owes its existence primarily to the impetus of its founder, Professor S. Randolph Edmonds, who served for seven successive years as president.[1] The need for directors to get together in conference, the need for bringing about recognition of dramatic work in the curriculum, and the need for raising a standard for dramatics in our schools and colleges were needs which were keenly realized by Randolph Edmonds and other college directors with whom he became associated in the building of the association.

The First Annual Conference at Dillard University, New Orleans, Louisiana. The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts held its first meeting at Dillard University, February 25, 1936. Sixteen colleges were represented at the first meeting, which was largely a conference of directors, though some student delegates were present and Tuskegee Institute gave a performance of Shaw's Candida for the conference. These were: Alabama State Teachers College; Wiley College; Fisk University; Alcorn College; Tougaloo College; Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College; State Teachers College; LeMoyne College;

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[1] Lillian W. Voorhees, "At the Turn of The First Decade," Souvenir Program, (Tennessee State College), 1946. p. 1.

Tuskegee Institute; Winston-Salem Teachers College; Shorter College; Southern University; Prairie View College; Atlanta University; Talladega College and Dillard University.

Lillian Voorhees[2] says "From the beginning, inspiration has been brought to the conferences of the association by outstanding speakers and leaders." It was noted that at the first conference at Dillard, Dr. Claude M. Wise of Louisiana State University brought the message.

The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts--(the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts since 1951) held its twenty-third Annual Conference at Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri, in the spring of 1959. It had its inception when S. Randolph Edmonds of Dillard University wrote letters addressed to "The Director of Drama" at all Negro Colleges (hoping they would fall into the right hands), in the fall of 1935.

The following named persons answered the letter directed to "The Director of Drama" and represented the schools as follows: M. B. Tolson, Wiley College; Lillian Cashien, Fisk University; Miss King,* Alcorn College; Mr. Barlowe,* Alabama State Teachers College; Mr. Lauriman,* LeMoyne College; Mrs. Jefferson,* Tuskegee Institute; and Mrs. Williams,* Winston-Salem. B. Inge, Hattie Duval, and Mr. Thompson,* Southern University; Lillian Voorhees, Talladega College; and Professor S. Randolph Edmonds, Dillard University. Shorter College was represented but

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[2]Ibid., p. 1.

*No first name is listed in the minutes.

the name of the representative seems not to have been recorded.

Only fragmentary notes of the first meeting are available. Lillian Voorhees, Executive Secretary of the association, 1937-1942, in a letter to the writer stated "No secretary's report for this year (1936) is on file. Anne Cook was elected secretary but never functioned."

From notes taken of the first meeting, as recorded by Lillian Voorhees, the following committees and chairmen were the beginning ones: organizational, A. P. Turner, chairman; debating, M. B. Tolson, chairman; creative activity, Mr. Sprague,* chairman; oratorical contests and speech activities, Miss King,* chairman.

There seems to have been several discussion groups. Mr. Brown* of Tougaloo College emphasized two things in his discussion of the advantages of Intercollegiate Dramatics. He stressed the importance and benefits of contacts between colleges and college students; and the recognition that each participating college would get on its own campus through participating in the association.

In the discussion group of the committee on creative activity, led by Mr. Sprague, considerable emphasis was given to: How delegates might return to their respective colleges and encourage playwrighting among students; how scripts written by students and members of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts might be tried out on stage (read) at the conference and how successful scripts would be sub-

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*No first name is listed in the minutes.

mitted to the creative committee; and how in all instances scripts should not be more than 20-45 minutes in length and should be written about Negro life. Also, it was emphasized that the best plays, or those so considered, should be deposited in the conference's circulating library; and how steps would be taken to get the best scripts published and copyrighted.

One group discussed Ways of Stimulating Interest Among the Conference Delegates. Emphasis was placed on group meetings for discussions of personal experiences as a basis for play material; and campus campaigns and personnel work.

One discussion group took as its topic The Carolina Dramatic Movement. The group decided that in this conference (SADSA) there would be eight entries (plays) from among the senior and junior colleges at the Annual Conference; that a one hundred dollar scholarship would be set up for an outstanding student; and that the plays would be presented in the form of a tournament. They decided that the scoring system for the tournament of one-act plays would be as follows:

Acting----------50 per cent
Costuming----------25 " "
Choice of Play---------25 " "

The group that discussed Ways of Overcoming the Difficulty in Getting Groups to Live Up to Arrangements covered in detail such things as the values of (1) contact, (2) producing plays in a strange environment, and (3) fostering good sportsmanship.

The notes on the organizational committee showed that the following things were discussed: A permanent organization--the name Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts was submitted and adopted for the permanent organization; a temporary set-up for the organization which called only for a president and secretary as officers. Randolph Edmonds was nominated and elected as the organization's first president. Anne Cook was nominated and elected as the organization's first secretary. The newly elected president had the power to appoint a committee on constitution and by-laws to report to the next meeting the following year. The organization decided to meet the following spring, 1937. Invitations for the next year's meeting was the next order of business. For some reason not stated in personal notes of Lillian Voorhees the matter of invitations for the 1937 meeting was tabled. But the next year's meeting itself was discussed. Concerning it, the following things were discussed: The Nature of the Organization; Should SADSA Consider itself a Regional Organization or Not? It was thought necessary to define regional as it would affect this type organization.

At one of the general meetings the president-elect, Randolph Edmonds, made some remarks. From the notes submitted by Lillian Voorhees, these remarks of the president-elect were made under the general title of "What Can We Expect of the Conference?" He said the following things of the organization:

1) To get to know each other better
2) To create favorable public opinion toward our work
3) To furnish material for scholars to think and write about
4) To set up educational objectives in the Speech Arts

5) To attack the solution of Speech Problems
   a) One hour per week in most colleges
   b) Find the answer to why debating has fallen so low
   c) Determine what to do about oratorical contests
   d) Determine how to organize verse speaking choirs and handle dramatic club meetings
   e) Determine how we must emphasize the collective effort
   f) Work through the organization for contacts

There was a general discussion on The Need for Negro Playwrights. In this discussion the matter of the difference between a playwright and a lecturer was discussed. It was felt that the playwright did not have to be a good speaker. It was agreed that the major excuses for not writing plays was "No time." Edmonds emphasized that "there is a demand for plays of Negro life. Playhouses, publishers, and theatre organizations want them." The delegates discussed pretty carefully the fact that the greatest difficulty about playwrighting is "learning the technique." The matter of divine inspiration was discussed, as was the necessity of knowing the stage and theatre thoroughly. It was also admitted that the opportunities for Negro playwrights were limited. Here considerable emphasis was placed on the Little Theatre Movement which was a part of this organization, and which could be depended on to produce the good and bad plays of members of the organization.

In a discussion on the Types of Plays We Should Have, it was the general feeling that the organization should write and promote plays of the following nature: (1) strong moral or religious plays, (2) folk plays -- suggested as good plays to start with; and (3) social problem plays. The group agreed with Randolph Edmonds that plays should have

(1) worthwhile themes--plays about characters who have made history (Negro characters), (2) pointed conflict, (3) positive characters vs. negative characters, and (4) melodramatic themes for beginning audiences.

A final discussion was on The Problems of the Director. Among the points discussed were: forming the dramatic club or organization; choosing the play; casting; rehearsing; committees--properties, costume, stage, call assistants, prompting; the audience; administration; and learning of lines; the types of directors--laissez faire, dictator type, or a combination type; gesture and voice; technical aspects of staging; and financing.

Dr. C. M. Wise, head of the Speech Department at Louisiana State University, was the guest critic and speaker. The notes show that Dr. Wise in giving his general impressions referred to Dillard University itself as being "New and Promising.". He felt that many "Outstanding subjects were discussed at this conference." He emphasized the need for the organization to get together; that at several points "the objectives seemed at varience; that the problems were similar but there seemed a lack of drive toward a goal." Dr. Wise warned that he envisioned a possible speech vs. dramatics attitude in the future. He felt that the Southern Association of Dramatics and Speech Arts was essentially a dramatic or theatre organization. It would seem that the critic had laid his hand on the pulse of the organization. There is no account that he was challenged on the character of the organization.

Dr. Wise commented on the play, Candida, done by Tuskegee Institute as the guest performance for the conference. He said "Candida had many

good spots. The minister's voice and bearing were technically perfect; but the play as a whole was stagey and stiff and suffered from immature voices." In his final remarks, the guest speaker gave considerable attention to the subject, Toward The Purity of Southern Speech. Here he emphasized to the delegates the importance of Sounds and Symbols and Sound Change. He talked about what to avoid in training the students to interpret the various plays.

Since no place for the next meeting is given in the notes, it seems probable that this first conference was adjourned without the delegates knowing where the next meeting would be held.

The Second Annual Conference at Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College, Tallahassee, Florida. Minutes of the Second Annual Conference, held at Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College in the Spring of 1937 were not too elaborate but were available.

At this conference which met at the Tallahassee, Florida school, April 2 - 3, 1937, it was decided by the delegates to continue the association on a permanent basis. It was decided that membership would include Normal Schools and Junior colleges on the same basis as the four-year colleges. An annual playwrighting contest was adopted as a feature of the conference. Directors of local organizations were urged to begin advertising the contest as the deadline date for the submission of plays was December first of that year. Plays were to deal with some aspect of Negro life, and the three winning plays were to be produced at the annual conference. Plays were not to exceed

forty-five minutes in producing time, and were to be judged on the basis of technique and realistic interpretation of life. Authors would retain the rights to their plays but members of the association might produce the prize plays free of royalty.

The sessions of the conference were given over to the study of various problems of method and policy with respect to writing and producing in our college communities. The closing feature of the whole program which consisted of the production of three one-act plays by the Dillard Players, was noteworthy. All of the plays were well done, but "Particularly the second number on the program, Yellow Death, a play written by the director, Randolph Edmonds, with setting in Cuba shortly after the close of the Spanish American War."[3] It was further pointed out by Voorhees[4] that as early as the following year, 1937, at the second conference at Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College, the beginnings of the festival idea were apparent with emphasis upon the production of original plays, although only one college, Dillard University, participated in the program of one act plays and only one original play, Yellow Death, by Randolph Edmonds, was presented.

It was noted in the secretary's minutes that the following named colleges were represented at the second annual conference: Alcorn; Bethune-Cookman; Dillard; Lane; Leland; Paine; Southern; and Talledega. Texas; Wiley; Winston-Salem; Xavier; and Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College.

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[3]Executive Secretary's Report, Second Annual Conference SADSA, (1937), p. 1.

[4]Ibid., p. 1.

It may be noted that there was no representation from Fisk University, Tougaloo College, Alabama State Teachers College, LeMoyne College, Tuskegee Institute, Shorter College, Prairie View College, and Atlanta University. On the other hand one notes the addition of Bethune-Cookman, Lane, Leland, Paine, and Texas College; and Xavier University.

An invitation was extended by M. B. Tolson, the representative from Wiley College, to hold the Third Annual meeting on that campus. The conference accepted the invitation and the 1938 conference was set for Wiley College, Marshall, Texas. Tolson was appointed chairman of the program committee. The newly elected officers included S. Randolph Edmonds, Dillard University, president; Carrie Pembroke, Lane College, vice-president; Lillian Voorhees, Talladega College, secretary; and A. P. Turner, Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College, treasurer.

Because Edmonds and Voorhees were named as president and secretary respectively at the Florida conference, it was their task to carry on the work of the association until the third annual conference to be held at Wiley College the following year. M. B. Tolson as program chairman was to work closely with the president and secretary toward the construction of a fine program.

The Association, 1938 - 1942

One significant fact of this period is that the 1938 conference was held at Wiley College and the 1942 conference was also held at Wiley. It will be noticed that S. Randolph Edmonds served as president of the association all during this period. But at the 1942 conference and since that time the presidency of the association has been held by others.

The reports of the Third Annual Conference show some improvements over the first two meetings. For one thing there was for the first time a conference theme, on which the guest speaker based his message. The theme for the conference was, "Cultural Contributions of Negro Artists and Writers." The secretary's minutes on the Conference Theme were in part.

> The keynote of the conference was struck and much inspiration was brought to all who attended by Mr. V. F. Calverton, guest speaker of the occasion, who is well known as novelist, anthropologist, critic, editor, and columnist. His chief message took the form of appreciation of the cultural contribution of Negro Artists and Writers, and encouragement to amateur writers in their creative efforts. The creative note was emphasized also by Mrs. Kruger who read selections from her own poetry, by Charles Winter Wood, De Lawd of Green Pastures, who enacted scenes for us, and by the play festival which for the first time, became a prominent feature of the program.[5]

The social aspect of the creative effort in dramatics was highlighted by professor Lewis of Wiley College in his discussion of

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[5]Lillian Voorhees, Report Of The Third Annual Conference (1938), p. 1.

Proletarian Drama and by Thomas Poag in his account of his experiences in the Community Theatre in Columbus, Ohio. Also, significant points of view on a variety of allied subjects were presented by the vice-president, Carrie Pembroke; Grace Sherman of Texas College; Lois Turner of Houston College for Negroes; Professor Hoard of Bishop College; and Lillian Voorhees of Talladega College.

This Third Annual meeting was held March 31 through April 2, 1938. Eighty-two delegates were present. Fourteen colleges and one high school were represented: Texas College; Dillard University; LeMoyne College, Lane College; Talladega College; Huston-Tillotson College; Wiley College, Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College; Bishop College; Langston University; Tennessee Agriculture and Industrial State College; Tougaloo College; Alcorn College; and Paine College.

At the regular business session of the conference the following business was transacted: After the minutes of the last conference had been read and accepted, suggestions from the executive group were made regarding the organization of regional groups and the conducting of the annual playwrighting contest. The recommendations of the executive committee regarding the organization into regional groups was adopted. The association was divided into the southwestern region--Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma; the south central region--Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama; and the southeastern region--North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. There was set up at this time an organization of a Regional Council composed of all

the directors of the region, headed by a director elected from the region to act as Regional Director or chairman. Temporary chairmen to initiate the organization in the respective regions were designated as follows: Southwestern, M. B. Tolson, Wiley College; South Central, Lillian Voorhees, Talladega College; and Southeastern, Charles Winter Wood, Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College.

In other business sessions the suggestions of the executive committee regarding the annual playwrighting contest were discussed. When a decision could not readily be reached, the matter was referred to a subcommittee. This committee was headed by Mahor of LeMoyne College, and included Thomas Poag, Charles Winter Wood, Nadine Jenkins, and Mr. Mayberry.* The committee's report showed it had reached certain agreements. It recommended that the regional idea for the playwrighting contest be adopted; that each school be expected to send a one-act play or a series or group of one-act plays to the regional contests; that there would be a group of three judges for the regional contest, one to be the regional director or chairman; the other two to be selected by the regional director; that the three regional judges select the best three plays and have them produced at the regional conference to be held at one of the schools in the region; that the best of the three plays should be sent to the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts conference and that the three plays, including the best selected from each region, would be produced at the SADSA conference, and

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*No first name is given in the minutes.

that the date set for the plays to be in the hands of the regional director should be not later than January 1st.

The records show that the report and recommendations of the sub-committee were adopted. Further suggestions which were put in the form of resolutions and adopted by the committee were that, as before, the plays should be of Negro life; that the award should consist of production by the association; that, as before, authors would retain all rights to their plays but members of the association would have the right of production free of royalty; and that the committee should look toward publishing and copyrighting plays coming out of the association contests to encourage the authors and protect their rights.

There occurred at this third annual conference for the first time an item of business that included a report from the treasurer of the association, A. P. Turner. The minutes show that the report was read and accepted.[6] The report showed the following:

Amount received at Second Annual Conference from admission fees		$30.50
Amount expended for stationery	$5.00	
Postage in dispensing stationery	.38	
Postage for use by secretary	5.00	
Total expenditure		10.00
Balance on hand March 31, 1938		20.00

Other sections of the minutes show that suggestions to the program committee indicated that members would be interested in debate,

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[6] Op. Cit., p. 2.

public speaking, speech correction, and speech education in general, interpretation including choral speech.

It was voted that a note of recognition and appreciation be sent to the Texas Little Theatre group for the fine work done with the college, high school, and community groups in that state.

The matter of membership of high schools was deferred until plans already projected by the president, Randolph Edmonds, had been considered.

The officers elected for 1938-1939 were as follows: president, Randolph Edmonds, Dillard University; vice-president, Carrie Pembroke, Lane College; secretary, Lillian Voorhees, Talladega College; treasurer, Grace Sherman, Texas College.

The delegation voted to hold the Fourth Annual Conference at Talladega College, Talladega, Alabama. The time for regional conferences was set for March. The time for the Southern Association's meeting was set for between April 15 and May 15, 1939. Also, before the conference adjourned two further motions were passed by the body. They were: (1) a motion extending a vote of thanks to Wiley College for generous hospitality; and (2) a motion that minutes of the conference be mimeographed and sent to all colleges included in the Association. The conference was then adjourned until the spring meeting, 1939.

The executive secretary of The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts writes that "With the conference at Talladega in 1939 came a new emphasis upon student participation and student leadership in the association." Several colleges participated in the festival of produc-

tions with a wide variety of plays and Talladega repeated its premiere performance of The Amistad, by Owen Dodson. Minutes of this meeting show that Dr. Alain Locke, philosopher, editor, writer, and critic, as speaker for the occasion, spurred the dramatic groups represented to higher standards of writing and production.

The Fourth Annual Conference at Talladega College, Talladega, Alabama. This Fourth Annual meeting and play festival of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts was held at Talladega April 27-29, 1939. The records show that ninety-nine delegates, representing twelve colleges in seven states, were present. These were: Talladega College; Dillard University; Tougaloo College; Alcorn Agriculture and Mechanical College; Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College; Wiley College; Texas College; Tuskegee Institute; Tennessee Agriculture and Industrial College; Alabama State College and Langston University. At the regular business session of the conference, and after the minutes of the last conference had been read and accepted, the regional chairmen made their reports. M. B. Tolson reported from the Southwestern region. He indicated many exchanges of productions in that region, but reported no activity of the regional committee and no plays presented. He did report that some original plays had been written.

Charles Winter Wood reported for the Southeastern region. He indicated no regional meetings and no exchanges, but brought five selected original one-act plays from three colleges in the region. These plays had not been presented.

Saunders Walker reported for the South Central region. He reported no regional meeting and only one play exchanged between colleges in that region. Only one original play was reported by Saunders Walker. This play, written at Knoxville College, was scheduled for production at the conference, but unfortunately, unexpected difficulties prevented the carrying out of this plan.

After reviewing the reports, the following policies were adopted with respect to the regional activity: The regional organizations were to be retained, but the regional meetings were abandoned; exchanges in the several regions were to be emphasized as a desirable activity; each of the three regions --Southwestern, Southeastern, and South Central-- was to select a school to represent the region with a production of an original play at the annual conference; the host school was to be left free regarding arrangements for other productions at the conference.

At this conference there was some considerable discussion on finance. It was felt that in order to obtain the necessary funds for carrying on the business of the association some definite policies had to be set up. The following policies were adopted: each school or club in the association would pay a membership fee of one dollar on the first day of the calendar year; delegates would be admitted free to all conference productions, but a small season ticket fee of fifteen or twenty-five cents would be charged all others attending the productions, and that the proceeds from this fee would be the

property of the association and not of the host college.

The association in this Fourth Annual Conference went on record as giving its encouragement to aspiring student actors, but because of the lack of financial backing it had to limit itself to just that.

The president appointed committees who would make reports at the next annual conference. He appointed a committee to study The Place of Drama in the Curriculum; a committee to work during the summer on plans for the participation of high school and community directors in the association which were proposed to become effective during the next conference; a committee in charge of experimentation with make-up; and a committee on plans for the participation of teachers of public speaking and debate in the association's activities. Members of the committee were: M. B. Tolson, Wiley College, chairman; Maurice Lee of Talladega College; and Hildred Moorhouse, Knoxville College.

The association received an invitation to hold the next annual conference at Tennessee State College, Nashville, Tennessee. The invitation was accepted. Laura Averitte as host director was chosen as chairman of the program committee for the 1940 conference. But the program chairman was prevailed upon to accept the following suggestions which might make for a better conference: To invite an actor-artist who would lend inspiration to the conference; and to provide in the program for extensive participation of students in the discussions. Since this feature of the Talladega conference had proved successful, it was suggested as a desirable feature to continue.

The session for the election of officers was held. The officers elected to serve during the 1939-1940 year were: S. Randolph Edmonds, Dillard University, president; M. B. Tolson, Wiley College, vice-president; Voorhees, Talladega College, secretary; and Grace Sherman, Texas College, treasurer. The regional chairmen were: Beatrice Fleming, Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College, Southeastern Region; M. B. Tolson, Wiley College, Southwestern Region; and Carolyn Davies of Tougaloo College, South Central Region.

It should be pointed out that the secretary's minutes indicated that the theme of the conference was: "What Can We Do To Improve The Quality of Dramatics And The Other Speech Arts on Our Campuses?" It was indicated, also, that the program included various types of discussion and demonstrations of choral speaking, debate and discussion, acting, lighting, make-up, and costuming. It is noted that "Mr. Walter Garwick of Rye, New York was present with his electrograph and made records of choral speaking, of the plays produced at the festival, and of some individual voices."[7] The secretary also recorded that exhibits of programs, stage models, books, records, and pictures were also a feature of the conference. The delegates were inspired at this conference, as at the last conference, by the presence of Charles Winter Wood who spoke on acting and gave an interpretation from the Green

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[7]Lillian Voorhees, Report of Fourth Annual Conference, SADSA, (1939), p. 1.

Pastures. The president, Randolph Edmonds of Dillard University, spoke interestingly of his experiences in Ireland and his impressions concerning the task of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. Dr. Alain Locke of Howard University, the guest speaker for the conference, gave an inspiring address urging more intelligent and creative effort in the colleges present, especially in the writing of better plays for production by the group.

As regards the play festival, on Thursday, April 27, the Talladega group presented The Amistad by Owen Dodson who was then a student in the Yale University school of Drama. On Friday, April 28, the Dillard University Players presented Gangsters Over Harlem by Randolph Edmonds and The Seer by James W. Butcher, Jr. And on Saturday, April 29, the Robeson Dramatic Club of Tougaloo College presented The Finger of God by Percival Wilde and the Alcorn Agriculture and Mechanical College Players presented The Dreamy Kid by Eugene O'Neill.

There were social features too. The session of the conference closed each day at 4 p.m. to allow for a period of relaxation. The secretary says "On Thursday an opportunity was given for getting acquainted through participation in dramatic stunts at the Little Theatre Workshop. On Friday, a recital was given in honor of the conference guests by members of the Talladega Department of Music. On Saturday afternoon tea was served for guests in Foster Hall Parlor."

The Fifth Annual Conference At Tennessee Agriculture and Industrial State College, Nashville, Tennessee. The 1940 conference, the fifth for the association, met at Tennessee Agriculture and Industrial State College,

Nashville, Tennessee. The minutes show that sixty-two delegates from eight states and thirteen colleges were present. These were: Alabama State College; Langston University; Talladega College; Fisk University; LeMoyne College; Fort Valley College; Tennessee State College; Alcorn College; Texas College; Dillard University; Atlanta University; Knoxville College; and Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College. This conference featured an active play festival. In addition to the three-act show produced by the Tennessee State Players, six visiting colleges presented one-act shows.

The first business session was presided over by the vice-president M. B. Tolson. Greetings were extended from him and from the president, Randolph Edmonds. The conference then settled into the business of the association. It was noted that the report of the 1939 conference was presented to the members in mimeographed form. Many items listed in this report served as a basis for procedure, discussion and action at this meeting, as it contained a record of reports, appointments and policies adopted.

An item of some possible interest was noted in the treasurer's report. She was unable to give a complete report to the conference at its first business session. But she subsequently gave her report which showed that the thirteen colleges present had paid their membership dues of one dollar each. The secretary then presented a bill for eleven dollars and fifty cents to cover expense incurred for mimeographing, stationery, and postage during the past two years. Payment of this bill

was authorized leaving in the treasury one dollar and firty-five cents.

As was the custom of the conference at this time, the three regional chairmen made their reports. From the Southeastern Region Miss Fleming reported that she had had difficulty in getting replies to letters sent to schools in her region. She reported that only two original plays had been submitted and that no contest had been held. Considerable dramatic activity was reported for Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College, although no exchanges were reported for the region.

Richard Barksdale from Tougaloo College reported for the South General Region. He reported no exchanges for Alabama State College, Alcorn College; Talladega College, and LeMoyne College. He did report origional one-act plays for Alcorn, Talladega, and from Tougaloo which had done a one-act play of Negro life. The one-act play from Talladega had been produced. It was reported that Fisk University and Tennessee State had exchanged plays; and Tougaloo and Dillard University had engaged in an exchange. Fisk, it was reported was carrying on an extensive playwrighting contest on its campus. John M. Ross was in charge of the Drama activities at Fisk.

M. B. Tolson reported four colleges present from the Southwestern Region. He reported that both Dillard and Wiley had sponsored high school activity in dramatics. Excellent acting was reported in the regional high school tournament sponsored by Dillard. The report said the single judge system was used, and the criticism well-taken. It was reported that there were five hundred high school students in

attendance at the high school festival at Wiley. Exchanges of plays were reported for Texas College, Wiley, and Prairie View; and special mention was made for the good work being done at Langston University in Oklahoma. Encouragement of writing and directing of plays by students and emphasis upon drama were reported as policies characteristic of the region. One might very well consider these regional reports as showing considerable improvement in the regional activities.

The four committees appointed from the last annual conference were not ready to make reports. The president requested that the committees continue to serve during the year, 1940-1941, and report the next spring. The president suggested also that interested members might volunteer to work on committees of their choice. The committees as appointed were as follows: Committee on Study of Place of Drama in the Curriculum. Randolph Edmonds, chairman; Beatrice Walcott, Tuskegee; John M. Ross, Fisk; Laura Averitte, Tennessee State; and Richard Barksdale, Tougaloo. The Committee on Participation of High School and Community Groups. Thomas Paag, Tennessee State, chairman; Grace Sherman, Texas College; and Owen Dodson, Atlanta University. The Committee on Experimentation in Make-up. Lillian Voorhees, Talladega College, chairman; Marcus Boulware, Alabama State College. Upon the request of the president for volunteers, the following names were added to this committee: Elizabeth Gordon of Langston; and Herbert Waters of Texas College. The Committee on Participation of Teachers of Public Speaking and Debate. M. B. Tolson of Wiley, chairman; and Maurice Lee of Talladega College.

Two reports of interest were made to the conference at this session. Randolph Edmonds reported that he had attended the Southern Regional Theatre Festival at Chapel Hill, North Carolina during the first week in April, 1940. Edmonds had had a place on the program as a speaker, a writer, and as a producer. He reported genuine liberality in attitude there, which, to him, spoke well for the future of dramatic activity in the colleges of the South.

Frederick H. Koch gives an account of Randolph Edmonds' visit to Chapel Hill when he says : "And this week Randolph Edmonds, talented Negro playwright, brings to our Festival stage a tragedy of his own people, Breeders, to be enacted by a group of Negro players from Dillard University in New Orleans."[8]

Lillian Voorhees was present at the meeting of the Southern Association of Teachers of Speech at Chattanooga, Tennessee the same week SADSA met, April 4-6, and reported a disposition on the part of this white organization to be interested not only in her paper on Speech in the Negro College, but in the work of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. It was suggested after Lillian Voorhees' report that the association keep S. A. T. S. aware of the activity and problems of SADSA, as a step toward possible coordinated efforts between the two organizations in the future.

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[8]Archibald Henderson (ed.), Pioneering A People's Theatre (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1945), p. 11.

At the business session the chief item of old business was the financial policy of the association. The question was raised with respect to the disposition of the proceeds from the registration fee and the conference productions. It may be remembered that the regulation made at the conference in 1939 provided for a definite fee of fifteen cents or twenty-five cents for a season ticket to be charged all those attending plays, except the delegates. The proceeds were to be the property of the association. No provision had been made for a registration fee nor for its disposition.

Thomas Poag asked for 50 per cent of the proceeds from registration fees and admission for Tennessee State to meet the expenses of the conference. This was something new. But after considerable discussion, the motion was finally passed that in the case of Tennessee State the conference agreed to pay expenses of the conference from the proceeds of registration fees and admission fees up to 50 per cent; that an expense account and account of proceeds be submitted by Tennessee State and that a permanent policy be discussed and formulated later. Later, in the conference, the future policy referred to was discussed, but was finally referred to the new Committee on Constitution.

Some officers and members felt that the annual fee of one dollar per member school was not sufficient for the growing association. A motion was passed that the membership fee be raised to five dollars per member school, payable at the opening of the calendar year.

When the meeting was opened for new business it was suggested

that a constitution was needed as a basis for procedure. A motion was passed that the president appoint a committee for the purpose of drawing up a constitution for the association. This was done. The committee appointed by the president included, John M. Ross, chairman, Laura Averitte, Thomas Poag, Lillian Voorhees was later added as an ex officio member, "because of her acquaintance with policies and rulings previously adopted and on record in minutes of conference proceedings."[9]

Matters specifically referred to the Committee on Constitution at this 1940 conference session were: A permanent financial policy, especially with regard to conference expense in its relation to the host school and visiting schools, a policy on the functions of the regional chairman; a plan for the editing of origional plays and the establishment of a play bureau; and a statement on the bases for membership. Here it was suggested that individual members, both students and members of the faculty, might be desirable as well as member schools, and that such memberships with fee attached might be a further source of income for the association.

Various suggestions were made to the Program Committee regarding conference policies for the next conference. It was suggested and agreed that it should be the policy of the association to give place in the annual conference for sessions on research in the field of Speech Education and Dramatics. It was suggested that the conference be made

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[9]Report of Fifth Annual Conference of The Southern Association of Dramatic And Speech Arts, (1940), p. 1.

more profitable by including sessions in which the productions given at the conference would be discussed, perhaps by an appointed critic as well as the various members. Summer study for directors was also recommended as a means of improving the membership professionally.

A further suggestion was that there should be more participation by students. It was felt and agreed that students would be invited to become members of committees and to take charge of some of the demonstration features. It was suggested that letters be sent to the presidents of the member colleges together with a report of the conference, and with invitations to the conference the following spring. This was a step taken to make sure the presidents would know about the activities of the association first-hand. And it was suggested that plans for producing plays at any conference be made as far in advance as possible--if possible at the end of the previous conference. A question was raised as to whether there should be any consideration in the way of fees for bringing large casts to the conference. The question was referred to the Committee on Constitution. Someone suggested that additional officers were needed in the association to take care of specific functions, such as a director of publicity and a field representative. A motion was made and carried. The two new offices were created. It was suggested, too, that the office of dramatic critic be created. But instead of creating this office it was agreed that a place in the conference would be given for a guest speaker who would also be competent to appraise the dramatic festival and keep the association in touch with the larger movement in the field.

The 1940 convention was, judging from the secretary's report, a very profitable one. In regards to the conference program, it was seen that the conference program, featuring the place of drama and speech in the curriculum, was rich and varied. It included demonstrations in acting, stage design, make-up, costuming and discussions on acting; playwriting, play direction, organization, stage design and stagecraft. There were also periods given over to interpretative dance and choral speaking. A highlight of the program was a unique demonstration in stage lighting which was given at the Fisk University Little Theatre--only a block or two down the street from Tennessee State--by the Fisk Stagecrafters. Scenes from the play Mimi La Croix were used in the demonstration.

The host director at Tennessee State was successful in bringing to the association and conference several outstanding guest speakers. These guest speakers were Mr. Ben Irvin, Executive Secretary of the New TheatreLeague, Mr. Howard Lewis, Make-up artist of the Columbus Theatre Guild, and Dr. O. Ascar Russell of Ohio State University. Dr. Russell, it was noted, spoke on several occasions during the conference, and gave much time in conference with interested individuals. In a chapel session he spoke concerning the plight of those with defective speech or no speech at all,,and on the obligation of every person to make the most of his opportunity to improve his speech. In another lecture he demonstrated clearly the falsity of some beliefs concerning the nose as a resenator. The report said of Dr. Russell that "one lecture

In another social feature on Thursday, it was noted, conference guests were entertained at the beautiful home of President and Mrs. Hale with a dinner dance.

The conference delegates took time out from the festive occasions to meet in session on Saturday morning to elect officers. The officers elected to serve during the year 1940-1941 were: president, Randolph Edmonds, Dillard University; vice-president, M. B. Tolson, Wiley; Lillian Voorhees, secretary, Talladega; and Grace Sherman, treasurer, Texas College. For Regional Chairmen, the conference delegates elected Beatrice Fleming, Florida, Southeastern region; Thomas Poag, Tennessee State, South Central region; and Elizabeth Gordon, Langston, Southwestern region.

The newly created office of Publicity Director went to John M. Ross, Fisk University; and the other newly created office of Field Representative went to Charles Winter Wood, Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College.

An invitation to hold the 1941 conference at Tuskegee Institute was extended by Beatrice Walcott of that school. The invitation was accepted. Beatrice Walcott was chosen as Program chairman for the 1941 conference. After a vote of thanks to the host school, its president and staff for their hospitality, the conference was officially adjourned until the spring 1941.

The Sixth Annual Conference at Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama. The sixth annual meeting and play festival of the Southern Association of Dramatic Arts was held at Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama,

was illustrated by moving pictures of Dr. Russell's face and of his larynx as he talked in a recorded lecture on the nature of resonance in speech." It is quite probable that those who attended the conference were inspired and benefitted by contact with this scholar and teacher who had a wide reputation in his field.

The play festival was another high spot on the program. The Thursday night, April 25 group of plays included one-act shows. They were: Dust of the Road, presented by the Alabama State Players; The Dictator Visits His Mother, presented by the Langston University Players; and The Last Curtain, presented by the Talladega College Little Theatre Guild.

The Friday night, April 26 bill of one-acts featured the Fisk University Stagecrafters in Reunion; the LeMoyne College Players in Crime Conscious; and the Fort Valley College Players in The Valiant.

The Tennessee State Players gave the conference a thoroughly enjoyable performance on Friday night, April 27 of Death Takes A Holiday. This ended the play festival for this conference.

There were many social features at this conference. The conference delegates were made welcome by the President of the college, Dr. Hale and Mrs. Hale, and by the college faculty. Music was furnished for the various occasions by groups under the direction of Ruth Strange, especially on Friday night, as a fitting prelude to the play program. The presence of Miss Ethel Wise on the Tennessee State campus during the conference was spoken of as "a fortunate coincidence." She gave what was termed an enjoyable "animated recital."[10]

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[10] Op. Cit.

April 23 - 26, 1941. The report shows[11] that one hundred and thirty-seven delegates were present from eighteen schools in ten different states. These were: Fort Valley State College; Tuskegee Institute; LeMoyne College; Winston-Salem Teachers College; Tennessee State College; Talladega College; Tisk University; Alcorn College; Langston University; Paine College; Lincoln University; Tougaloo College; Houston-Tillotson College; Texas College; Atlanta University; Wiley College; Spelman College and Longview High School. Productions were contributed by thirteen different schools and each school present contributed to some part of the program.

The conference opened at a chapel meeting Wednesday night, April 23, with a welcome from President Patterson and from a representative of the Tuskegee Little Theatre. Charles Winter Wood, the speaker for the occasion, had an inspiring message and presented an impressive characterization in his well-known role of De Lawd in Green Pastures. One notes that President Patterson of Tuskegee also addressed the group at the conference dinner on Friday night April 25, and the president's wife, Mrs. Patterson, received the conference guests at Tea Oaks on Thursday night after the plays.

There were two business sessions of the conference. At these sessions reports were received from the officers. The report of the secretary which had been sent out in the spring in mimeographed form was reviewed, received, and adopted. The treasurer's report showed a balance on

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[11] Report of The Sixth Annual Conference of The Southern Association of Dramatic And Speech Arts, (1941), p. 1.

April 23, of one hundred eight dollars and three cents.

The President reported visits to various schools and attendance at meetings of organizations similar to SADSA; he commented on his activities in backing the work of the committees, and his interviews with college administrators. He stressed the need of interesting more teachers of public speaking and debate in The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts and the need of promoting publicity concerning dramatic activities and other achievements of the Negro group. The President felt this need especially in playwrighting. He expressed a hope that in time "A national movement might bring about attention to dramatics in the curriculum of all Negro colleges."[12]

John Ross, the Director of Publicity, reported difficulty at first in getting the cooperation of the various papers and of the Associated Negro Press, but stated that "successful contact had finally been made with the Pittsburgh Courier and with Mr. Barnett of the Associated Negro Press." John Ross said "Arrangements have been made to give the meeting of the conference full publicity." The Publicity Director reported that during the year he had visited several schools and explained to them the work of the association. He included the following recommendations in his report: That more schools send programs and data of interest to the publicity office; that the Director of Publicity be allotted a certain sum of money to carry on the business of the office; and that a certain amount be allotted the several

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[12] Op. Cit. p. 1.

Regional Chairmen to carry on their work.

The Field Representative, Charles Winter Wood, reported that although all of his proposed trips to schools did not materialize, he had been in contact with the high schools and had spoken on various occasions in New York City.

The chairman of the program committee for the sixth annual conference, Beatrice Walcott, expressed her thanks for prompt replies to letters. She suggested that for the future those who would be participating in the play festival would consider the number in the cast, playing time and properties, and should give advance notice of these items to the committee in charge; and that a sum be allotted for conference expenses, especially for the featured speaker.

The Regional Chairmen reported. From the Southeastern Region Beatrice Fleming reported better response from the schools than in 1939-1940. She reported productions that had been given at Allen University, Fort Valley, Paine and Florida. She reported no exchanges nor participation in tournaments or festivals, but growing interest in a state-wide high school tournament sponsored by Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College. Five schools were present at the conference from the Southeastern Region.

Thomas Poag from the South Central Region gave a report of productions in the colleges of that region. The list indicated full production seasons with choice plays of hugh quality. Origional plays had been written and produced in a few of the schools. Some of the schools in this region were, according to Poag, "inactive this year

but hoped to participate next year." He expressed a desire for more exchanges between schools near enough to get together easily. Elizabeth Gordon gave a very excellent report of activities from the Southwestern region, at the conclusion of which a motion was made by John Ross that it be put on file with the commendation of the association. Gordon reported that eight of the eighteen schools in this region had become paid members of the association for the year 1940 - 1941, which was a larger number than that from any other region. It was brought to the attention of the delegates that this regional chairman had sent out three circular letters and a questionnaire to all schools in the region. Though there were few replies, Elizabeth Gordon had visited four of the schools, had exchange programs reported from five of the schools, and an indication of increased activity throughout the region. Lack of money (in each school situation) seemed a general difficulty in the way of more activity, --especially for providing the necessary equipment for producing plays. Mrs. Gordon suggested that the schools in the region she represented could profitably study home-made mechanical and technical aids to production. She concluded her report when she said "For another year, we still need to give more consideration to the study of scholarly work in the field; and to experiment more with different types of plays and with make-up and lighting; and to expend greater effort to share experiences, and to exchange productions."[13]

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[13] Ibid.

The chairman of the committee on experimentation in make-up, Miss Voorhees, reported only seven replies to the questionnaires on make-up sent out to all members, and no response to circular letters from members of the committee. The replies from the questionnaires returned indicated: A need of awareness and analysis of problems; results not entirely satisfactory; no clear philosophy, little experiment, little special training; little attention to the art as a branch of Little Theatre work; and encouragement in challenge and range of productions, considerable interest in make-up, and desire to experiment.

It is significant that a demonstration on make-up followed in which it had been hoped that several colleges would participate. Talladega, however, was the only college contributing. An attempt was made to show how a combination of various shades of **Thespain,** a greaseless paint, could be used to even up complexions for characters in the same play,--i.e. bring a dark complexion up and a light complexion down. A question period, critical comment, and a discussion period followed. At the conclusion of the session more cooperation was requested, and a recommendation was made that data be collected for a publication by the association in the field of make-up.

The delegates voted to continue this committee on make-up as an active committee through the year until the next conference. A few additions were made. The make-up of the committee was as follows: Lillian Voorhees, Talladega, chairman; Marcus Boulware, Alabama State;

Elizabeth Gordon, Langston; Herbert Waters, Texas College; Mrs. Evelyn Martin, Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College; and Baldwin Burroughs, Tillotson. The other committees--Committee on Study of Place of Drama in the Curriculum; Committee on Participation of High School and Community Groups; and Committee on Participation of Teachers of Public Speaking and Debate--had no reports ready for the conference but were continued. Thomas Pawley of Lincoln was made chairman of the Committee on Study of Place of Drama in the Curriculum. And working with him were: Beatrice Walcott, Tuskegee; John M. Ross, Fisk; Richard Barksdale, Touraloo; and Miss Wilson, Tillotson.

Thomas Poag, Tennessee State, was continued as chairman of the Committee on Participation of High School and Community Groups. Working with him were: Grace Sherman, Texas College; Owen Dodson, Atlanta; Laura Averitte, Tennessee; and Constance Fleming, Long View High School, Long View, Texas.

M. B. Tolson was continued as chairman of the Committee on Participation of Teachers of Public Speaking and Debate. The other member was Maurice Lee, Talladega.

It was noted that the chief matters of old business were automatically passed upon in the ratification of the Constitution by a majority of the twenty-eight member schools which had been represented at any conference in the past five years.

John Ross gave a report of the Committee on Constitution of which he was chairman. He told of a preliminary meeting in October, of the subsequent meeting of the committee in November, and the final mailing

out of the copies of the Constitution. The names of the colleges ratifying the Constitution were read. The report was received and adopted and a copy filed with the secretary. It was called to the attention of the assembly that the conference was operating under the provisions of the constitution newly adopted. It was recommended that copies be mimeographed and a copy sent to each member school.

In the matter of new business brought before the conference, it was noted that recommendations discussed by the Executive Committee and later by the whole association included: A fifty-cent registration fee for all voting candidates at the conference; the need for closer checking upon the types of plays chosen for the annual festival, cooperation of visiting groups in arranging with production chairman in advance, and arrangement of play offers for production into acceptable bills of plays; and need for a plan for evaluating productions--a critic judge or a committee or a discussion period.

Two invitations were received for the 1941-1942 conference. Prairie View and Wiley College invited the association. After some discussion, it was voted to accept the invitation from Wiley. It was agreed to continue the plan of having the host director act as program chairman for the conference. By that arrangement Tolson of Wiley was named chairman of the Program Committee for the 1941-1942 conference.

The annual election was carried out in accordance with the provisions of the newly adopted constitution, giving each paid member school six votes, and a single vote to each individual paid member.

The officers elected for 1941-1942 were: Randolph Edmonds, Dillard, president; M. B. Tolson, Wiley, vice-president; Lillian Voorhees, Talladega, secretary; Grace Sherman, Texas College, treasurer. Regional Chairman were: Beatrice Fleming, Florida, Southeastern region; Thomas Poag, Tennessee State, South Central region; and Elizabeth Gordon, Langston, Southwestern region.

Beatrice Walcott, Tuskegee, was named Director of Publicity; and Charles Winter Wood, Florida, was named as Field Representative.

There were several outstanding people as conference speakers; Miss Anne Cook of Spelman College was one of them. Miss Cook spoke interestingly of her experiences in visiting campuses for the American Association of University Women in the interest of the allied arts. She pointed out that the purpose of her visit was to bring together through cooperative endeavor in a short period of time, a production of the living-newspaper variety, working not with or through organizations, "But to bring out the creative talent of all interested individuals on the campus, some of whom might not otherwise be discovered."[14]

Owen Dodson of Atlanta University was one of the guest speakers. Dodson brought a challenging message to young Negro playwrights. He pointed out the need for learning the craft and exploring untried possibilities both in subject matter and techniques. He emphasized the

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[14]Ibid., p. 5.

contribution that could be made by all the newer techniques--radio, living newspaper, choral speaking, and the like. Mr. Dodson said "The Negro Theatre needs Negro playwrights and Negro plays. So far, dramatists have only been looking through the key hole."[15]

Another one of the outstanding guest speakers was Miss Northcutt of the Southern Education Foundation. Miss Northcutt because of her contact with Jeanes teachers had many helpful suggestions to make regarding work to be done by those trained in speech on a cooperative basis. She emphasized the importance of genuine interest and study conditions, of sincere and conscientious effort, of making every class a speech class, of helping adults through drama to become more articulate, of the possibilities for creative contributions in health plays or other plays with a message, and in all kinds of community programs.

Dr. Frederick Koch of the University of North Carolina was the main speaker. Dr. Koch, noted teacher and editor, touched the main theme of the conference in a vital way in his discussion of the fifth dimension or sense,--" the impulse to create." This eminent teacher who inspired such playwrights as Paul Green and Maxwell Anderson is quoted as saying in his closing remarks to the conference at Tuskegee, "Hit haint what you make not how fine hit is; the main thing is how good hit makes you feel just a-makin' it."

There was plenty of activity of a fruitful and enjoyable nature

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[15] Ibid., p. 5.

at this conference. At a special session there was a panel discussion on the Drama and Speech Activities in Education. Dr. J. Max Bond of Tuskegee presided. In the course of the discussion it was brought out that the larger definition of speech education could cover successful social adjustment. The definition took into account the part played by both parents and teachers in creating a desirable environment for the child and the need for the use of all possible teaching aids in developing the use of the Speech Arts as both creative and cooperative activities.

There was at this conference for the first time a discussion regarding dramatic tournaments versus festivals. The report shows this round table discussion was quite lively. Two points of agreement were found: That a competitive element and some form of evaluation were desirable. There was some question as to whether the necessary stimulus could best be furnished by setting up competition and setting up standards for judging in a tournament, or by creating the desire to do well through some scheme of evaluation,--not necessarily through placement by judges.

Another special session was that of the symposium on playwriting. This symposium criticized Negro playwrights for too much use of the same theme. It was suggested that the Negro had a unique contribution to make since he is a Negro. Members of the symposium suggested four things to Negro playwrights: That Negro playwrights could write about Negro middle class life,--not always Negro folk drama; that Negroes might write about white life as they see it; that more experimentation was needed--not enough was being written, and not enough of what was written was going into waste baskets; and that perspective was needed

for creating desirable attitudes among Negroes toward plays of Negro life.

The Tuskegee conference program was varied and interesting. In addition to the play festival, the delegates enjoyed a Speech Night and a program of Dramatic Recitals. It was noted in the secretary's report that for the first time in the history of the organization a whole session was given over to speech activities apart from drama. Professor M. B. Tolson of Wiley College, the speaker at the conference dinner, gave an inspiring and encouraging message urging more creative effort. At the session which followed, there was an extemperaneous speaking contest, a debate on the subject, "Resolved, that the nations of the Western Hemisphere should form a more perfect Union," and a radio demonstration by Alabama State College. The winner of the speaking contest was Ozella Holman of Tuskegee, with honorable mention for Hugh Hill of Talladega. The Tuskegee Creative Dance group, under the direction of Mrs. Amelia C. Roberts, entertained the audience very acceptably between numbers.

The Dramatic Recital was introduced by Saunders Walker, director of the Tuskegee Little Theatre. He spoke very interestingly of his own experience with dramatic recitals and of some of the techniques he used in cutting a long play for recital, in indicating the various characters, and in creating the atmosphere. His remark that there were widely-varying conceptions of what constitutes a dramatic recital was well sustained in the variety of the program which followed his remarks. Included on the program were cuttings from Beyond, Tuskegee; Mary Tudor, Fisk; Craig's Wife, Tennessee State, The Confession (an origional

characterization) Tennessee State; and Is Shirley Insulted?, a humorous skit, Fort Valley.

The Thursday morning, April 24 play festival included the following one-act shows: The Sharecropper, by Fort Valley State College; The Release, Texas College; and Wits' End, Alabama State.

The Thursday night, April 24 play festival included Unfinished Business, done by the Tuskegee Little Theatre Group at their Bucket Theatre. The report noted that "This production marked the opening of the Bucket Theatre, a rural theatre in the vicinity of Tuskegee, and part of a far-reaching plan for community rural theatre projected by Saunders Walker, director of the Tuskegee Little Theatre."[16]

Other shows on this same night were done on the main campus. They included Fennel, done by LeMoyne College; Fixin's, produced by Winston-Salem Teachers College; Behold the Man, by the Tennessee State Players; and The Murders of Miriam, produced by Talladega College.

On Friday afternoon, April 25, the conference witnessed an original play, By Their Fruits, by John M. Ross of Fisk University. The play was done by the Fisk University Stagecrafters.

Three plays were done on Saturday morning, April 26. They were: The Underdog, done by the Alcorn College Players; The Proposal, done by Paine College; and Shades of Cottonlips an original play by Charles Lamb, done by Langston University.

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[16]Ibid., p. 7.

The Saturday night, April 26 host performance was Our Town, by Thornton Wilder, and featured the Tuskegee Institute Little Theatre group.

According to Lillian Voorhees, the secretary, "The program of the sixth annual conference was one of the richest the association has experienced. Grateful acknowledgement is due Tuskegee Institute for its gracious hospitality." She mentioned that in addition to the social features already mentioned, sightseeing trips had been planned to the Veteran's Hospital and to the Tuskegee Airport. It was mentioned that Beatrice Walcott, program chairman for the conference, had not only planned an effective program but rose with gracious good humor to meet all the emergencies of a dramatic conference. Miss Voorhees said that Saunders Walker with his characteristic courtesy and thoughtfulness was the perfect host at the newly-renovated Little Theatre, and met all the demands of the producing groups with gracious efficiency.

A copy of the treasurer's report for this conference shows the following:

Balance on hand April 27, 1940		$13.00
Share of admission and registration fees at Tennessee State, 1940	$66.85	
Dues, 1940-1941	70.00	
		136.85
		$149.85
Disbursements		
For secretary's materials	39.89	
For postage and exchange	1.33	

	41.22
Balance on hand, April 23, 1941	$108.63

The Association, 1942 - 1951

The Seventh Annual Conference at Wiley College, Marshall, Texas.

The 1942 conference at Wiley College marked a milestone. It marked the end of the association's meeting without the usual frustrations. For the same reason that other similar organizations had to slow their pace in activities, the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts had to slow its pace during the War. For according to Lillian Voorhees, secretary of the association during this time, "The annual conference was continued successfully through 1942 when the association met at Wiley in the midst of and in spite of wartime acceleration and conscription, and received inspiration from a visit to M. B. Tolson's Log Cabin Theatre."

It seems obvious that the effect of the war was felt in the Wiley program of activities. Much of the fuss and flurry known to the delegates when the conference had met at other colleges and on other occasions was gone. The host chairman was as gracious as could be expected but the ghost of Pearl Harbor was with him. Many of the regular attenders did not make it to the conference.

The usual reports were made and the annual election was "staged." The indications were that many expected Tolson, host director and chairman, to get the presidency of the organization whenever Randolph Edmonds stepped out of that office. M. B. Tolson had been with the conference pretty consistently from its beginning. And Tolson was serving as vice-president at the time of this conference.

Randolph Edmonds was not up for renomination that year. He was stepping down. But the vice-president did not get the presidency. Several

names were placed in nomination, including Floyd Sandle of Grambling College. There was little or no sentiment for Sandle because he was attending the conference for the first time this year and he withdrew his name. The minutes show mild confusion. And after a little anxiety which showed some mild but negative confusion from the Tolson followers, including Tolson himself, Thomas Poag was elected president. His election was made unanimous. Before the conference was over, and when all tempers were cooled, it was the consensus of all that Thomas Poag was the right selection for SADSA's president-elect.

There were other changes in officers. Elizabeth Gordon was elected secretary, Baldwin Burroughs was elected vice-president, and Randolph Edmonds was made Honorary President, an office which he would have the privilege of keeping for life.

The play festival ran as usual. But it was not the usual mild play festival which most had become accustomed to from conference to conference. Something new was added. M. B. Tolson proved a spectacular host on this occasion. He set the play festival to begin each night at 10:00 p.m. instead of the usual hour of 8:00 p.m. But the delegates were delighted at what they termed "the professional touch."

The plays presented at the festival were: Thirst and Man in the Stalls, Tennessee State; The Obstinate Family and Gangsters Over Harlem, Dillard University; scenes from Native Son, Prairie View College; Craig's Wife, Tillotson College; and Circumstantial Evidence, Grambling College.

The conference delegates were entertained in the home of President

Dogan gave the entire delegation a dinner which marked the high spot of the conference. At this dinner the Grambling College delegation was caught up in emotion when the Toast Master and President-elect of the association, Thomas Poag, asked them to stand and receive the plaudits of the conference and the host dignitaries for what Thomas Poag termed "An outstanding interpretation of that English play, Circumstantial Evidence."

The conference closed with no place to go for the coming year. The war had made things too uncertain. Some of the delegatew were already in the service and many of those at this conference had only been deferred until the end of the school year. But as the secretary said, it is to the lasting credit of Thomas Poag, elected president in 1942 at Wiley, that during the four years of stress which followed, despite all disrupting influences, the association was kept intact through the Newsletter which appeared at intervals, irregularly but persistently, keeping the members in touch and making it possible to pick up again in 1946 where we left off in 1942.

The Tenth Annual Conference at Tennessee Agriculture and Industrial State College, Nashville, Tennessee. The Tenth Anniversary Conference of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts met in 1946 at Tennessee A. and I. State College, Nashville, Tennessee. The conference was in session from April 10 - 12. The minutes show this conference was outstanding in many ways. There was here for the first time at any SADSA meeting a critic judge and a guest speaker. Mr. Raymond Johnson, director of the Nashville Community Playhouse and writer for the Nash-

ville Tennessean, was the critic judge. Mr. Dick Campbell, Coordinator of Negro talent, USO-Camp Shows, Inc., was the guest speaker. At the public program, which the Tennessee State faculty and student body attended, along with the conference delegation Mr. Campbell spoke on the subject: "The Negro in Drama and the Theatre." Before Mr. Campbell's address, the president of Tennessee State, Dr. Walter S. Davis, gave the delegates an unusually well prepared speech of welcome. The program of activities for this meeting included an outstanding student panel. The discussion was: "What are the Leading Problems Encountered in Dramatic Organizations?" On another occasion on the seemingly well planned program, James O. Hopson of Talladega presided over a symposium which discussed the subject, "What is the Role of SADSA in the present Decade?" This discussion proved to be both spirited and challenging. The discussants who had made careful preparation for this session were: Laura M. Averitte, Children's Theatre; Lillian Voorhees, Fundamentals of Speech Training; Sue Craig, Choral Speaking; Thomas Pawley, Stagecraft; Clifton Lamb, Directing; James Brown, Acting; and Randolph Edmonds, Playwrighting.

The business sessions went off according to the careful plans of the host director and president, Thomas Poag. One notes that the delegates were delighted, and said so that between this conference and the last time the group had met in 1942, Thomas Poag and Lillian Voorhees had received their doctorate degrees from Cornell University and Columbia University respectively.

Poag was reelected president of the association, to serve for the

1946-1947 term. James O. Hopson was elected secretary; Clifton Lamb, then of Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, North Carolina, was named treasurer; and Lillian Voorhees, now of Fisk University, was named Publicity Director and Field Representative.

The financial report for this conference, as of December, 1946, showed:

(Including Conference Transactions)

Receipts

Brought forward		$17.00
Registration fees		130.50
Festival performances		68.55
Total		216.42

Expenditures

Fisk Stagecrafters rental spotlights	6.00	
Dick Campbell--fee	25.00	
Tennessee State lights and equipment	5.94	
Total	36.94	36.94
Balance on hand		179.48

The festival of plays on Wednesday night April 10 and Thursday night April 11 were the eager concern of the majority of the conference delegates. Surely there must have been more plays at this meeting than at any other meeting in the history of the association. There were only two original plays in the more than twelve plays presented. The two original were Barren Heritage, by director James Brown of Florida A. and M.; and Millsboro Memorial, by Arthur Clifton Lamb, director from Johsnon C. Smith University.

Some of the other plays presented were: Mooncalf Mugford, by the players from Clark College; Strange Road, by the players from Talladega College; The Finger of God, by the players from Southern University; Cloey, by the Lincoln University Stagecrafters; The Terrible Meek, by the players from LeMoyne College; His First Date, by the Tennessee State Children's Theatre; and A Marriage Proposal, by the Fisk Stagecrafters.

The Grambling College Players did an act from Old Acquaintance; and Arkansas State A. M. and N. College players did an adaptation from Street Scene.

The critic judge held a session Thursday and Friday morning, April 11th and 12th respectively. He went over each play carefully for the benefit of those assembled. This type session was of major benefit to each school and director as well as to the total delegation.

On Friday night, April 12, following a delightful visit to the home of President and Mrs. Walter S. Davis of Tennessee, the Tennessee State Players Guild delighted the conference with their presentation of Outward Bound, a three-act drama by Sutton Vane.

Arkansas State College invited the conference for the coming spring, 1947. The invitation was accepted.

The Eleventh Annual Conference at Arkansas State College, Pine Bluff, Arkansas. The eleventh annual conference and play festival of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts was held at Arkansas State College, Pine Bluff, Arkansas, April 30, May 1 and 2, 1947. Ten colleges were represented from six states with a total delegation of fifty-five.

Colleges represented included Arkansas State; Dillard University; Fisk University; Grambling College; Kentucky State College; LeMoyne College; Lincoln University; Southern University; Tennessee; and Texas College. Though not as largely attended, says the report, as in some years, the conference was one of the most outstanding in the history of the association. It appears to have been highlighted by general participation and leadership among students present, by a varied program of festival productions, and by definite progress in the effective functioning of both special and standing committees. The conference was appropriately begun and closed by the president, Thomas E. Poag, on a note of dedication to the highest purposes.[17]

At the opening business session on Wednesday, April 30, the president called on the secretary to give a report of the recommendations of the Executive Committee. It was recommended that the following conference committees be organized under the leadership of the chairmen designated: Finance, Thomas Pawley, chairman; Publications, Lillian Voorhees, chairman; Constitution, Grenville Sawyer, chairman; Membership, Thomas Poag, chairman; Playwrighting, Randolph Edmonds, chairman; Resolutions, Helen F. Holmes, chairman; and Exchange, L. C. Archer, chairman.

It was further recommended that all except the Resolutions Committee continue after the conference as standing committees to report from time to time through the bulletin and at the next annual conference. Also that

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[17] James O. Hopson, Report of Eleventh Annual Conference of SADSA, (1947), p. 1.

the Executive Committee function as a committee on committees, a committee on conference planning and a committee on awards.

There were no reports from the regional directors. Miss Voorhees, Publicity Director and Field Director reported press publicity of the Tennessee State conference and advance publicity for the Arkansas conference in ten leading Negro newspapers. She mentioned that she had released notices to Theatre Arts Magazine, and other magazine publications for Mr. Dick Campbell's speech from the 1946 conference. This officer said she had attended the Writer's conference at the University of New Hampshire during the summer of 1946 and had learned much that would help her in the publicity work of the association; and that only one bulletin was issued for The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts because of the difficulty in getting news items and programs promptly.

The Field Representative mentioned that at Chicago in December, 1946, at the national convention of the Speech Association of America and the American Educational Theatre Association she was impressed with the possibilities of the use of Audio-Visual Aids in the teaching of speech and dramatics. The A. E. T. A. was recommended as a live organization offering education services to those working in the field through active committees and published reports.

The Field Representative also mentioned a trip to Kentucky State College as speaker at a chapel service in January, 1947. During this visit she saw at Kentucky State an excellent performance of Mr. Edmonds'

play Nat Turner.

Before the first business session was closed, committees were organized and asked to meet immediately and to make reports at the final business session on Friday of that week. In addition to the chairmen who had previously been appointed, the following delegates were appointed to the respective committees: Finance; Singer Buchanan, Jeretha Fields, Miss Crenshaw*, and Miss Pitts.* Publication; Edwin Robinson, Miss Bernard,* Miss Exum,* Mr. Bullock,* Mr. Cook,* and John Ross. Membership: Nina Dancy, Alexander Angel, Louise Smith, Fred Moore, Madeline Brewer, James Merrissee. Playwrighting: Gloria Maddox, Constance Shirley, Evelyn Pressier, and Granville Sawyer. Resolutions: Melvin Willians, Hermine Howard, Miller Mischal, and Charles Smith. Exchange: Miss Grice,* R. J. Hill, Elvin Calham, Chalmers Jones, LaVerne Wilkins, and James Lewis. Constitution; Marie Cochrane.

At the final business sessions on Friday afternoon, reports from the various committees were presented and discussed. The committee on finance reported the receipts from the conference fees to date as eighteen dollars and thirty-four cents, which together with the balance from 1946 left a total asset of two hundred twenty-five dollars and sixty-one cents. Some of the delegation fees were not yet in, however, and no expense account had yet been rendered. Funds were temporarily deposited with the Arkansas State College Bursar. The report

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*No first name is given in the minutes.

was received and adopted.

In its report the Committee on Publications made a number of recommendations. Among them were the following: That an annual journal be published each year after the annual conference; that the purpose of the journal should be to furnish a publicity outlet for the organization, to encourage and preserve creative efforts in the field of the drama; that in line with these purposes, the program review and planning news be allocated to the periodic bulletins reserving the annual for such items, a playwriter's box, director's forum, a student panel, backstage enecdotes, onstage items and comment, field notes, who's who, and a book shelf; that the project be underwritten by the organization with the suggestion from Randolph Edmonds that the aid of a foundation or educational fund be sought to finance it; that each paid up member of the SADSA receive one copy, others to be sold according to size within the range of one to five dollars; that the format be a paper covered journal about the size and thickness of Life magazine with art cover design and illustrations; no advertisements to be included except those useful to persons working in Speech and Drama; other details left to the Editing Board; management to be in the hands of a Board of Editors, with chairman and three directors and three students, one each from each of the three regions.

No name was suggested for the journal. The report was received and adopted.

In its report the Committee on Playwriting recommended that local playwriting contests be held during the year; that colleges bring

original plays to the conference; that plays be sent to the committee to be read and judged even when schools cannot be represented at the conference. The report of this committee was received and adopted with the following additions from the conference: That a prize or prizes be offered for original plays each year; that the journal might publish the best plays written each year; and that the contest might be promoted through the NewsLetter.

The report of the Resolutions Committee resolved: That an extension of thanks be made to Arkansas State College, to President Davis, to L. C. Archer, director at Arkansas and his Spotlighters, to the Dean of Men and of Women, to the directors of the dining hall; that arrangements for future conferences be made by December first of each year and information concerning these arrangements circulated by this date; that there be student representation on the Executive Committee to be elected by the conference body; that copies of the constitution be made available to all members of the organization; that the Executive Committee explore the possibility of an enlarged program of speech work; and that a definite schedule of rehearsals be made available to participants in the play festival at the opening of the conference. It was voted that the conference accept the recommendations and to ask the Committee on Constitution to consider those recommendations which involved constitutional amendments. It was also voted that when necessary constitutional provisions be waived in order to function in accordance with the will of the body until

the revised constitution could be considered. It was noted that this motion referred to the proposal that there be three student members of the Executive Committee for which there was no provision in the existing constitution but to which all members of the conference agreed.

Recommendations from the Committee on membership were: That regional festivals be held; that each regional director should appoint teachers in each area to promote the interests of the organization; that directors should be encouraged to engage in exchanges; that regional directors make surveys of teachers of Speech and Drama in the high schools and grade schools of their areas and encourage them to become members of SADSA; that regional high school festivals be held and the best play presented at the annual SADSA conference; that the membership fee for teachers be two dollars; and that there be a sustaining membership fee of five dollars; that majors and minors in the colleges be asked to take out individual membership at two dollars each. That an employment bureau be established for teachers of Speech and Dramatics to be handled by the Executive Secretary for 1947; and that a key award be established. A design by Benton Adams of Tennessee State was presented for consideration. In addition to those suggestions which were accepted, Floyd Sandle of Grambling suggested that information be sent to the presidents of the various institutions represented as well as to the directors. This suggestion was approved.

In the report of the Committee on Exchanges it was suggested: That the basis for exchanges be worked out between the schools concerned on a home to home basis, on a fifty-fifty basis, or on some other basis agreeable to both schools; that there be more extensive exchanges; that these exchanges begin early in the season; and that so far as possible exchanges be arranged with complete tours; Also, that the chairman of the Exchange Committee act as a liaison person.

The report of the Committee on Constitution offered the following recommendations: That association members be received into The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts outside the prescribed area; that these associate members might be interested individuals or institutions; that the regions of the SADSA referred to in Article III Section 1 be specifically defined; that one-act plays presented at the festival be limited to 20-30 minutes with no changes of scenery and use of properties held at a minimum; that the conference speaker and critic not be a member of the association; that there be student members of the Executive Committee not to exceed three; that there be a standing committee on constitution; and that the office of secretary and treasurer be combined and a corresponding secretary be added.

The report was received and adopted and it was voted that the president of the association appoint a standing committee on constitution of not more than five members with at least one member being a student.

The final business of the conference was the election of officers

for 1947-1948. A report was brought in from the nominating committee which was headed by Thomas Pawley as chairman and included Helen Holmes, Floyd Sandle, Gloria Maddox, and Edwin Robinson.

The following slate was presented by the committee: For president, Thomas E. Poag, Tennessee State; for vice-president, L. C. Archer, Arkansas State; for second vice-president (student), A. C. Odell, Grambling College; for Executive secretary, Lillian Voorhees, Fisk University; for treasurer, Floyd Sandle, Grambling College; for publicity director, Helen F. Holmes, Kentucky State; for field representative, Randolph Edmonds, Dillard University; for director of the South Central Region, Elsie VanNess, LeMoyne; for the Southwestern Region, Vivian Tellis, Southern University; and for the Southeastern Region, Sue Craig, Paine College.

It was moved and seconded to adopt the slate. The motion was carried. It was also voted that the Committee on Constitution consider a system of rotation of officers.

At a final meeting of the Executive Committee five items of business were transacted. A budget of three hundred dollars, the estimated assets when the conference business was settled, was drawn as follows:

Bulletin	$ 60.00
Executive Secretary	50.00
Field Representative	75.00
President	15.00
Treasurer	10.00
Journal	100.00
	300.00

This amount was later reduced to two hundred dollars, the item for the journal being dropped until the final reports of the conference receipts and expenditures were made.

This was a conference at which business sessions were the major activity. But there were other discussions and there was a play festival. There was time for social events. One discussion of vital importance to the conference and one which a majority of the directors and students took part in was the discussion on Speech and Drama in the Curriculum. Members of this panel were: Florence May, Tuskegee, chairman; Gloria Maddox, Fisk; Thomas Poag, Tennessee State; Nadine Jenkins, Lincoln; Marie Cochrane, Southern; Floyd Sandle, Grambling; and Velma A. Parks, Texas College.

After giving a brief history of the phases of Speech and Drama found in the developing curriculum, the chairman proposed the following questions for consideration: What should be the status of Speech and Drama in the curriculum? Separate from English? A Part of English? Speech and Drama separate? Extracurricular? What should be the requirements? Is there any uniqueness in the situation of the Negro college in this respect? What should be the basis of organization? Major and Minor? Compliance with State requirements, and the like?

The prevailing points of view expressed in the discussion were: That the courses in Speech and Drama should be fitted to the needs of the student; that there definitely seemed to be a need for courses in Speech Correction and in Public Speaking for students not majoring in the field; that state requirements frequently dictated catalogue offer-

ings; and that the Speech and Drama work definitely needed to be separated from the English Department in spite of the trend toward so-called "Communications" and the desirability for an integrated program. The report[18] showed this to be one of the most heated sessions at the 1947 conference.

The play festival got underway Wednesday night, April 30, with four plays scheduled to go on. But because of last minute developments one group, the Riverbend Players of Southern University, did not go on. The plays that did show were: Rare Cut Glass, Fisk Stagecrafters (an original play by Gloria Maddox, a student); Write Me a Love Scene, The Kentucky State Players; and This Night Shall Pass, The LeMoyne College Players.

The Thursday night, May 1 play festival featured the Lincoln University Stagecrafters in The Fumed Oak; the Grambling College Players in Guns Against The Snow; the Tennessee State Players in Indian Summer; and the Dillard Players in The Slave With Two Faces.

There were indications that the festival of plays was better balanced than in previous years and furnished an interesting variety of tragedy, comedy, farce, and melodrama.

The critic judge and guest speaker for this occasion was Mr. John M. Ross, then Technical Director at Dillard University. Mr. Ross gave timely criticisms of the plays.

On Thursday noon at a public meeting at which the host director, Mr. Archer, presided, the conference was greeted by President Lawrence

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[18] Op. Cit. p. 10.

Davis. The conference delegates were made aware of the fact that President Davis was himself an outstanding college debater and shared the cause of SADSA. Outstanding music for this occasion was rendered by the Arkansas State choir, under the careful direction of Professor A. M. Lovelace. Ross was, as previously mentioned, the guest speaker for this chapel setting. His subject was "Eugene O'Neill's Negro Protagonists." It was felt that Mr. Ross as a playwright and actor of some merit qualified as an analyzer of this subject. He concluded that Eugene O'Neill's plays of Negro life, The Emperor Jones, The Dreamy Kid, and All God's Chillun Got Wings, do not indicate any particular interest in the Negro nor understanding of him, but that the Negro characters he chose were well suited to the depiction of pity and fear in accordance with the best classic traditions of tragic drama.

There were also some outstanding choral speaking and dramatic readings featured. Among the dramatic readings on the program were: Discrimination, by the Dillard Verse Speaking Choir; Old Love, Thirteen Sisters, and Judgement Day, by the Arkansas State Verse Speaking Choir; I Have Seen Black Hands, scenes from Dead End, and scenes from Medea, Lincoln University students; Southern Justice, Tennessee State; and Mercutio's Queen Mab Speech from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet.

And according to the secretary's report[19], the success of the con-

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[19]Ibid., p. 12.

ference was due very largely to the thoughtfulness and graciousness of Mr. Archer and the Spotlighters who not only concerned themselves with the comfort of the guests and effective provision for staging the festival, but furnished entertainment for the enjoyment of the guests throughout the conference. In regards to entertainment one recalls that on the first evening a get-acquainted dance after the play was sponsored by the Pan-Hellenic Council; that the Spotlighters were hosts at an off-stage party on Thursday night; and that a farewell dance on Friday night was sponsored by the Men's and Women's Senates. President and Mrs. Davis received the conference guests at their home between 6:30 and 7:30 on Thursday night; the Home Economics Department acted as hostesses after the plays on Friday night; and L. C. Archer entertained the directors at their home Thursday night after the plays. And to top off the play festival and give it a fitting climax, the Spotlighters, under the careful direction of Mr. Archer, presented Franz Werfel's The Song of Bernadette, Friday night, May 2.

The secretary's report did not make too much of the account, but mentioned briefly that a little misunderstanding developed in the Executive Committee regarding finances for this conference. Enough was said to warrant the impression that very little if any, money was realized for SADSA from the play festival. It seems that this situation only left its unpleasant feeling with members of the Executive Committee, for they were the only ones who knew about it. For that reason, guests at the eleventh annual conference will not soon for-

get the warm hospitality of Arkansas State College.

The conference received two invitations for its twelfth annual meeting. One came from Wiley College and one from Grambling College. Both schools were in the area with Arkansas State College. For that reason no decision was reached on the invitations as it was thought best to solicit other invitations in other regions, thus giving other institutions an opportunity to hold the conference nearer their campuses. In the fall of 1947 Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College made a bid for the conference and got it. This was the result of several developments. Wiley College had entertained the conference two times already and Florida had entertained the conference, so Grambling's invitation seemed the obvious one to accept. But Floyd Sandle of Grambling had been offered and was expected to take the position of Drama Director and Head of the Speech and Drama Department at Southern University. This fact was well known to Randolph Edmonds who was in on the development. Edmonds' thought to Sandle was that Sandle should have the conference at Southern University during his first year, 1949, rather than at Grambling College during his last year, 1948. The compromise was accepted, and the 1948 conference went to Florida.

The Twelfth Annual Conference at Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College, Tallahassee, Florida. It is no wonder the twelfth annual conference and festival of SAFSA in 1948 was called one of the best and most successful in the history of the conference. It met at Florida A. and M. and showed marked growth both in numbers and in quality of

dramatic production. According to the report of the secretary[20], there were 115 delegates present from twenty five schools in twelve states. These were: Alabama State; Arkansas State College; Bethune-Cookman College; Clark College; Edward Waters College; Fayetteville Teachers College; Fisk University; Florida A. and M. College; Fort Valley College; Georgia State College; Kentucky State College; Langston University; Lincoln University; LeMoyne College; Louisville Municipal, Morris Brown College; Middletown High School; Skyloft Players; Stillman Junior College; South Carolina College; Talladega College; Tennessee State University; Tuskegee Institute; Wilberforce University.

The report shows that outstanding features of the conference were: the realization of the drama of publishing an annual which took the title, SADSA Encore; The Edmonds Festival, celebrating the twenty-first anniversary of the first president of the organization, Randolph Edmonds, in the Educational Theatre; and emphasis on the work of the Children's Theatre.

Copies of Encore were distributed to all paid members of the association. Lillian Voorhees had served as editor for the first issue.

The conference felt fortunate in having as consultants and critics, Mr. Abraham Hill of the American Negro Theatre and Mr. Robert Schnitzer of the American National Theatre and Academy, who also spoke at the opening session. Other distinguished visitors included Mrs. Helen Seeny

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[20]Report of the Twelfth Annual Conference of SADSA, (1948), p. 1.

Spaulding of the Skyloft Players in Chicago and Professor John S. Lovell Jr. of Howard University.

The Edmonds Festival was celebrated by two short plays and two long plays written by Edmonds. The one-act plays were produced by former students of Edmonds. Norma Hull Bland of Clark University did Gangsters Over Harlem; Joseph Adkins of Fort Valley did Nat Turner; Thomas Poag of Tennessee State did Earth And Stars, a three-act; and Edmonds himself, with the Florida A. and M. Players, did his new play, Prometheus And The Atom. The Grambling College Players were on the program to complete the slate of three one-act plays by students of Randolph Edmonds. This group, directed by Floyd Sandle, had a serious wreck in Georgia en route to the conference and had to return home.

Tennessee State's production of Earth and Stars caused many at the conference to express the feeling that the play deserved a wider public and that the organization should take steps to further its production throughout the country.

Other productions of one-act plays were: The Second Guest, by the LeMoyne College Players; The Stepmother, by the Riverbend Players, Southern University; Highness, by the Fayetteville State Teachers College; Sleeping Dogs, by the Kentucky State Players; The Boor, by the Fisk University Stagecrafters; and George, by the Wilberforce College Players.

It was viewed as a high point in this conference when twelve students were cited for excellence in acting. Nine students were

rated in the "A" class and three in the "B" class. In the "A" class were: David Kilgore, Clark College; Lawrence Faulkner, Fisk University; Pola Garrett, Alice Freeman, Talladega College; Singer Buchanan, Lucile Smith, Madelyn Brewer, and Clifton DeMarks, Tennessee State; and Irene Smith, Wilberforce. In the "B" class were: Edwin Robinson, Le-Moyne College; Lonnie Tucker, Southern University; and Sallie Dade, Fisk University.

Professor Lovell in the Saturday morning session discussed "Negro Performers on Broadway," and gave highlights from his recent articles published in Crisis and Theatre Arts. He pictured Broadway realistically as full of "Great Hazards and Great Delights." He observed that "the Negro actor's lost is a drama in itself, with the radical stereotypes on the professional stage prevailing." He said "There is no such thing as Negro Drama' in America." And that "We should try to extend these stereotypes remembering certain significant facts listed below:

> You are a Negro actor.
> You are an American actor.
> You are an individual actor with dreams.
> You are just plain people with the yearnings of plain people."[21]

Professor Lovell's talk created much discussion. These discussions stressed opportunities of the community and college theatres, as well as Broadway; and called attention to the various organizations existing to

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[21] Op. Cit., p. 3.

bring together Broadway and the academic and community theatres, notably the National Theatre Conference and the American National Theatre and Academy.

The chief business transacted at the conference was the election of officers and the appointment of committees for 1948-1949. Officers were elected as follows after the presentation of a slate by the nominating committee which was adopted with amendments. Thomas Poag president; James O. Hopson, vice-president; Stephen McPherson (student), Southern University, second vice-president; Lillian W. Voorhees, executive secretary; Floyd L. Sandle, treasurer; and Helen F. Holmes, publicity director.

It was recommended that two more officers be added: an assistant to the executive secretary and an editor of SADSA Encore.

Four student representatives for the Executive Committee were nominated and elected. These were Ernestine Grice, Arkansas; Lawrence Faulkner, Fisk; Pola Garrett, Talladega; and Jane Blanchard, Clark.

In addition to the officers already mentioned above the following offices were filled: Director, Southeastern Region, Jospeh Adkins, Fort Valley; Director, South Central Region, Elsie VanNess, LeMoyne; and Director, Southwestern Region, Vivian Tellis, Southern. The Field Representative was Randolph Edmonds, Florida.

Miss Voorhees said in her report

> It should be noted that student participation in the twelfth annual conference and festival was gratifying both in the discussion groups and in the transaction of business. Whether or not the students attending these annual conferences form a group of

> their own as they have contemplated it is hoped that they will continue active in the organi zation and conduct of the conference itself as their contributions have increasingly given new life to the association.[22]

It was mentioned that an invitation to join the American Educational Theatre Association had been extended to The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. The invitation and AETA's meeting in Washington, D. C. the next winter was briefly discussed, but referred to the Executive Committee as was the possibility of affiliation with the IDA (Intercollegiate Dramatic Association). In regards to AETA, members were told that no discrimination nor discriminatory practices would be found in this association in the event members of SADSA attended the annual conference.

Greetings were brought by President William S. Gray of Florida at the opening assembly. This proved one of the highlights of the meeting. For it was easy to see that Dr. Gray had more than a passing interest in the work of the conference. And in addition to the very lively panel on the Children's Theatre, there were discussions on The Community Theatre and on the Future of Speech Education. Also, the work of the Children's Theatre at Florida A. and M. was ably demonstrated, first in the production in the auditorium of the Lost Gem, a children's fantasy in one-act by Irene Edmonds, and later developed in demonstrations and a panel at the Children's Theatre in the Lucy Moten School. The dis-

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[22] Ibid., p. 4.

cussion centered upon the educational values of creative dramatics and ways in which children can be stimulated to work freely and creatively, and at the same time to strive for excellence in the performance.

Lillian Voorhees asked to be released from the Editorship of the SADSA Encore for 1948-1949 in view of her duties as executive secretary and the desirability of rotating such responsibilities and privileges. James O. Hopson of Talladega was appointed to this post with the promise of assistance and support from the former editor.

The treasurer's report could not be given because of Mr. Sandle's accident and consequent absence. A report was made, however, by the secretary of income from the conference which totaled $349.52 including registration fees, memberships and sales of Encore. Bills totaling $63.16 were presented for postage, supplies, and expense incidental to bringing out the Bulletin and Encore and these were honored. The bill for the magazine to be met on May 13 was as follows:

500 copies SADSA Encore	$739.55
Alterations	67.32
Air Express	16.13
Tax	6.96
Total	829.96

It was felt that the income from advertising and from sales of Encore together with the guarantee of three hundred dollars from Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College would sufficiently supplement the amount in the treasury to meet the bill.

No invitation was received for the next year's conference. Atlanta was suggested as a possibility with triple hosts--Clark, Atlanta Univer-

sity, and Morris Brown. No action could be taken as representatives from Clark and Morris Brown were unauthorized to issue an invitation. These delegates were requested to investigate the possibilities.

The report of the Resolutions Committee was received and adopted.

The Twelfth Annual Conference was adjourned.

The Thirteenth Annual Conference at Grambling College, Grambling Louisiana. The Thirteenth Annual Conference of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts met at Grambling College. The theme of this year's conference was: "Joining Forces for the Improvement of School and Community Life--Through Speech and the Educational Theatre." The host director had so structured the program as to make it necessary for the president of the association to speak to the student body and faculty at Grambling College early in the conference. Early on the first day of the conference, following the usual registration and reports from officers, this general assembly program took place. Top honors at this assembly were shared by President R. W. E. Jones of Grambling College and Dr. Thomas Poag, president of the association. President Jones in his speech of welcome set the tone of hospitality which the conference was to enjoy during its three day visit to Grambling's campus. Dr. Poag set the tone of what the association was bringing in the way of a program to the campus. There was little doubt in the minds of the delegates that President Jones was behind the host director Floyd L. Sandle's program in Speech and Dramatic Arts at this college. Dr. Poag took excellent advantage of this opportunity in his subject, SADSA Comes of Age: Its Purpose and Responsibility in Our Colleges," to get the program of the

organization across to the delegates of the association as well as to the students and faculty of Grambling College.

In the business sessions two things became apparent. There were several amendments proposed to the constitution the necessity of which seemed uppermost in the minds of several delegates. These were passed on to the Committee on Constitution in the hope that these amendments might be adopted at the 1950 conference. The other thing was that this conference did not need to worry about finances needed to defray the expense for the 1949 SADSA Encore nor any other expense of the conference. The host director made it known in advance that tickets for the two nights of one-act shows by the visiting colleges and the host production on Friday night had been sold out in advance of the conference's arrival. It was a new experience for the Executive Committee to relax and enjoy the conference without worrying about money.

The host school had been fortunate in securing the services of three outstanding critic judges and an outstanding guest speaker for the conference. The critic judges were: Dr. Robert B. Capel, Northwestern State College, Louisiana; Professor Vera A. Paul, Louisiana Polytechnic Institute; and Dr. C. L. Shaver, Louisiana State University. The judges gave their criticisms of the previous night's plays each morning at 9:00 o'clock. The secretary's report says these sessions with the critic judges were "both helpful and stimulating."[23]

In a panel on Thursday morning, April 28, the subject "The Re-

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[23] Report of the Thirteenth Annual Conference of SADSA, (1949), p. 1.

sponsibility of Colleges to High Schools in the Development of Better Speech and Drama Programs," was discussed. And later that same morning in another general assembly in the college auditorium, Mr. John Wray Young, Director of the Shreveport Little Theatre and guest speaker for this conference spoke to the conference and Grambling's student body on the subject, "An Analysis of Drama and the Little Theatre in the Improvement of Community Life."

On Thursday afternoon the students from nine of the visiting colleges took part in a student panel that discussed the subject, "The pre-Service Training Program in My College for Teachers of Speech and Dramatics." Following this discussion a one-act play, winner in the state high school drama festival of the Louisiana Interscholastic Athletic and Literary (LIALA) was presented. This was a new experience for this association. This had been talked about but had never been done.

Following a short "coke" break, and with Dr. C. L. Shaver serving as consultant, there was an open discussion for directors on the subject, "Some Essential Skills Needed by In-Service Teachers of Speech and Dramatics."

Friday morning, April 29, following the critique on the plays of the previous night, there was a discussion on "Classroom Dramatics in the Elementary School: Its Relation to the Language Arts Field." There were a number of high school teachers from Louisiana schools in attendance at the discussions. Also, in attendance were the president of the LIALA and the president of the Louisiana State Teachers Association.

Other panel discussions on Friday included, "The Children's Theatre," "Drama in the Churches: Suiting the Plays to Community Tastes," and "Integrating Forensics in the Speech and Theatre Program."

There was a session of Choral Speaking and Interpretative Reading which featured Miss Rhoda Jordan of Fisk University and students from Dillard University, Tennessee State and Grambling College.

At the annual play festival the following plays and schools were featured on Wednesday night: The Finger of God, Fayettewille State Teachers; The Boor, Bethune-Cookman; Lucifer At Large, LeMoyne College; For All Eternity, Kentucky State College; Manikin and Minikin, Fort Valley State College; The Mayor and The Manicure, Fisk University.

The Thursday night, April 28, shows included Master Piere Patelin, Jackson College; Gray Bread, Talladega College; Man In The Stalls, Tennessee State; If Men Played Cards As Women, Southern University; Rain, Florida A. and M. College; and Half Caste Moon, Arkansas State College.

On Friday night, April 29, the Grambling College Players presented Candida, George Bernard Shaw's Comedy in three-acts. Parts of three letters received from the founder of the organization and Field Representative, Randolph Edmonds; the president of the association, Dr. Thomas Poag; and the editor of Encore, Dr. James O. Hopson indicate some general sentiment of visitors to the conference:

May 11, 1949

Dear Sandle:

I am just getting out from under a mass of work which has accumulated suffieiently to write to you and

let you know what a fine job you did with the meeting of our Drama Association. Everything went off extremely well and it was very gratifying to clear as much money as we did. This will make it possible to clear all of our indebtedness without fear . . . .

I am happy to see that you are getting so much equipment and support. President Jones seems to be enthusiastic about your work. I am sure he will back you in your efforts. . . . .

Sincerely yours,

Randolph Edmonds

May 21, 1949

Dear Sandle:

Please forgive me for my long delay in writing you since our recent drama conference. As president of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts, allow me to congratulate you and your staff on making our recent conference the greatest in my estimation in the history of the association. I am certain that I voice the sentiments of the entire association when I say that we are grateful to you and your various committees for the hospitality, kindness, and sincere consideration shown to us while on your campus . . . .

We are still holding up our Speech and Drama Directory until we can receive the names of the high school drama teachers and directors in Louisiana from your office.

Members of my organization who were present at the conference are still talking about your presentation of Shaw's play. We enjoyed it immensely. You are also to be congratulated on your Little Theatre.

Very cordially yours,

Thomas E. Poag

May 10, 1949

Dear Sandle:

This is just a note to again thank you for the wonderful way you handled the conference and the hospitality that you and the whole Grambling campus showed us . . . .

You have a nice physical setup there for dramatics and your program should continue to grow. Both my students and I were especially enthusiastic about your Little Theatre building. We found ourselves wishing we had one as attractive and as well-equipped . . . .

I must also mention CANDIDA again. With real sincerity I say that it was a very smooth performance. Particularly did I enjoy the movements and positions assumed on the stage. The fact that a heterogeneous audience was able to maintain its interest throughout a Shaw play is a tribute to the way the play was presented.

Yours sincerely,

James O. Hopson

It has been mentioned that the 1949 conference was a financial success. From the monitary returns at this conference the association was able to pay off the following bills:[24]

May 28, '49 McQuiddy Printing Company (Nashville) SADSA Encore	$860.86
May 28, '49 Helen Holmes SADSA Bulletin	42.00
June 18, '49 Printing Stationery-McQuiddy Printing	45.24
June 18, '49 James O. Hopson --Edit. Expense	27.04
June 18, '49 Thomas E. Poag - Postage, Telephones, Telegrama	30.34
June 18, '49 Lillian Voorhees - Postage, Telephones, Telegrams	16.80
June 18, '49 Floyd L. Sandle - Conference Expense	16.96

[24] Op. Cit. p. 3.

Amendments proposed by the Executive Committee in the 1949 conference were as follows:[25]

Article VI. By-Laws. Regarding Succession of Officers

a. Instead of a secretary and a treasurer, the Article shall read "an executive secretary."

b. The executive secretary shall be elected for a term of three years and upon retiring shall act for one year as a consultant for the new executive secretary.

c. The editor of SADSA Encore shall be appointed by the executive committee for a term of one year. The editor may succeed himself.

d. The president shall be elected for two years, and upon retiring shall act as chairman of the executive committee for one year.

e. The first vice-president shall be elected for two years and shall automatically step up to the position of president at the expiration of his term as vice-president.

f. The second vice-president and third vice-president shall be elected each year for a term of one year.

The secretary's report shows that the amendments were voted on by Mail Ballott the fall of 1949.

It would appear that the social events at the Grambling Conference were enjoyable in top SADSA fashion. There was the well-hosted affair for the directors in the well-appointed home of President and Mrs. R. W. E. Jones, as well as three special off-campus dinners for the directors. The student organizations, sororities and fraternities relieved the host director of the necessity of preparing entertainment for visiting students.

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[25] Ibid., p. 5.

They took this over entirely.

There were no changes in officers; however, the amendment to combine the offices of secretary and treasurer into one office, executive secretary, was adhered to even before it was voted on in the fall of 1949. It shows in the secretary's report that the treasurer of 1949 turned over money and records in May, 1949, immediately following the conference at Grambling. The association's treasurer was Floyd L. Sandle. Dr. Lillian Voorhees became the executive secretary.

The conference received and accepted an invitation to hold its next nonference at Kentucky State College, Frankfort, Kentucky.

The Fourteenth Annual Conference at Kentucky State College, Frankfort, Kentucky. The executive secretary's report[26] shows that the SADSA conference which met at Kentucky State College in 1950 was of quality as the others before it. The theme of this Fourteenth Annual conference was, in the words of the secretary, "Happily Chosen and struck a progressive keynote with which all the sessions and productions were in accord." The theme was, "Toward One America and One World." The report shows this was evidenced by the place given on the program to such persons as William Hodapp, Script Editor, Station WAVE, Louisville, Kentucky on Radio and Television in Our College Programs and Carlton Moss, Radio Commentator, Producer-Writer of Hollywood, Cali-

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[26]Lillian Voorhees, Report of Fourteenth Annual Conference of the SADSA, (1950) p. 1.

fornia; by a student symposium on the Place of Public Discussion and Debate in Our Modern World; by the inclusion of sessions on Speech Correction and The Children's Theatre, vital factors in modern education; by the production of such plays as Bread, Fixin's, The Cake of Winds, an original dance drama, by Marjorie Jordan of Southern University, and Crosswise, an original one-act drama by L. C. Archer of Wilberforce State College, and Kentucky State's excellent production of the three-act drama Deep Are The Roots, also, the message from ANTA (American National Theatre and Academy) by Professor Irving Walsh of Bowling Green concerning the National Theatre Assembly to be held in Washington, D. C., January 2, 3, 4, 1951, with the aim of One Theatre in America; and Kentucky State's president, Dr. Atwood's timely account of the progress of interracial education, especially on the college level in Kentucky; and Dr. Charles McGlen's masterful address on the subject, "We Hold These Truths," the secretary called it "A message of both hope and challenge."

The secretary's report of the conference:

> Under the able leadership of Mrs. Helen F. Holmes and the Kentucky Players and the cordial hospitality of President and Mrs. Atwood, Dean Harwell and the entire administrative staff and faculty, Kentucky State afforded the conference a warm welcome, stimulating meetings, comfortable quarters, excellent meals, a glimpse of Kentucky's noted Calumet Farms and famed breweries opportunities for recreation and sociability and a genial atmosphere in which to work and live.[27]

The conference was characterized by cordiality, good management and forward-looking sessions. It seems that there was not ample time for

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[27] Ibid., p. 1.

all of the items in the program and all the business to be transacted, but all that was accomplished made the conference a memorable occasion.

As for productions in the Fourteenth Annual Play Festival, the following plays and schools showed: Bread, Lane College; Special Guest, Fort Valley State College; Happy Journey to Camden and Trenton, Fisk University; Fixin's, Talladega College; The Severed Cord, Lincoln University; The Bishop's Candlesticks, Tennessee State; Sanitorium, Arkansas State; The Cave of Winds, and original dance drama, Southern University; Winter Sunset, Tillotson College; and Crosswise, an original one-act play, Wilberforce State College of Education; and John Doe, Tougaloo College.

Dr. Charles A. McGlen of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, guest speaker, also acted as critic of the festival together with Mr. Carlton Moss, Radio Commentator, Producer and writer of Hollywood, California. Sessions for critical comment were held at the Workshop the day following each group of plays. The plays were staged on April 26 and 27 at night, and on the morning of April 28. The critics adopted a constructive approach to their task which was very helpful. They commended the organization upon the "no prize, no award" festival program which it had maintained from the outset. As in previous years the festival idea was stressed and the critics emphasized points of strength and weakness, using individual productions and players as examples but avoiding any attempt at overall rating of acting or directing.

The number of participants and the quality of plays chosen met

with favorable comment. It was clear, however, according to the secretary, "That there were too many plays of the same type; three on one night almost alike in emotional tone." The conference took into consideration that this situation was of course a matter which would have to be handled in the festival regulations for entries and in the words of one member, "Points to a need for by-laws to aid the conference chairman and his committee." Another suggestion growing out of this critique session was in regard to selection of plays for balance was that at least one play each night should be by a Negro playwright. Someone commented, "There also should be on the program at least one classic, and one play dealing with modern young people's problems."[28]

The keynote of the conference was struck by the guest speaker, at the conference assembly on April 27. Among the truths underlined in his very effective address, We Hold These Truths, were the following relating to true freedom of speech in its largest sense:

1) We teach persons not subjects.
2) Every person has a right to opportunity for the development of his personality to the extent of his personality.
3) Every person has a right to know relationships in different situations, - not in restricted ones.
4) Every person has a right to first class citizenship and it is our responsibility to bring it about.

Closely related to this address were the sessions on Speech Correction and the student panel on the Place of Discussion and Debate in Our Modern World. The methods discussed by Mrs. Smith in the Speech Correc-

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[28] Op. Cit., p. 3.

tion session were devised to help the handicapped individuals "Work toward success and pleasure in speaking." Students discussing the values of public discussion recognized its part in freeing and developing individuals as well as in releasing tensions, the report said: and promoting understanding and freedom of thought was conceived of as a part of freedom of speech. Students from Lincoln, Fisk, and Kentucky State participated in this panel under the able leadership of Professor Tolson of Langston University.

Members of the conference seemingly felt that one of the most stimulating sessions of the conference was the one on playwrighting, made lively by the divergence of opinion in the panel of playwrights. Hopson, the chairman, pointed out that "The Negro has not made as much progress in this area as in other literary achievements," and threw out a challenge to the panel. Edmonds said "We have proved we could act and must now prove that we can write plays." He pointed out that we move from theory to practice more quickly in this era than in any other. Dr. Pawley plead for creative play directing through freedom in handling the script as well as for attention to creating plays. We concluded, "We must develop playwrights. We must produce their plays." Mr. Moss, the guest at the conference, emphasized the opportunity and responsibility that was SADSA's "To sponsor the writing and production of new plays which will find their market in the educational not the commerical theatre. We are living in a period of change stimulating to playwriting but to meet the challenge, we must become craftsmen worthy of it, 'not

good Negro writers, but good writers.'"[29]

The section on Radio and Television, Mr. Hadapp* and Grant Moss serving as consultants, emphasized the place that both of these fields will have in schools and colleges with increasing emphasis on Audio-Visual Aids. The consultants pointed out types of programs available as well as opportunities of working into stations by the approach, "What can I do for the station?", not "What can the station do for me?"

Business sessions were held on Wednesday and Friday afternoons of the conference. Conference committees appointed to report at the last session were a Resolutions Committee and a Nominating Committee. The Resolutions Committee was composed of M. B. Tolson, Langston, chairman; Laura Averitte, Tennessee State; Lois P. Turner, Fayetteville State; Lucile Smith, Tennessee State; and Sarah Rinehart, Arkansas State.

The Nominating Committee was composed of Thomas Pawley, Lincoln, chairman; Miss Hickman,* Wilberforce State; Randolph Edmonds, Florida A. and M.; John M. Ross, Arkansas State; Theodore Brooks, Tougaloo; and James Luck, Fisk University.

There were a number of reports given at the conference. The president's report concerned chiefly activities of the SADSA membership in areas of integration, --notably in the AETA and the Southeastern Theatre Conference. Thomas Poag and Lillian Voorhees were members of the Advisory

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[29] Op. Cit., p. 5.

*No first name is given in the minutes.

Council of AETA and had attended the national conference in December, 1949. The president pointed out also that Thomas Pawley, Randolph Edmonds, Joseph Adkins, and Florence May had attended the conference. Poag called attention to the fact that Edmonds was then serving as chairman of the Committee on Constitution in the Southeastern Conference and that Poag was then one of the Regional Directors. The president also spoke, he said, at the March meeting, 1950, of the conference held at Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida. Greetings from AETA to SADSA were brought by both Thomas Poag and Lillian Voorhees. Poag concluded his report by reading telegrams from Robert Breen, Warner Watson and Robert Schnitzer of ANTA.

The executive secretary reported briefly on the January meeting of the Executive Committee in which plans were outlined for the annual conference at Kentucky State in April, and a membership campaign was launched upon which it was hoped to set up a larger budget.

The Field Representative, Randolph Edmonds, spoke of the effort to interest State Teachers Associations in The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts by adherence to the slogan, "Speech and Drama Training in Every School." A beginning had been made in Florida and he had presented a play at the Georgia State Teachers meeting. He reminded the conference of the "successful efforts in Louisiana, during our 1949 conference" to bring in state teachers. Edmonds reported that the playwriting contest was a disappointment in as much as no award could be made though ten scripts were submitted. These, he said, fell below standard both in form and content.

There were no reports from the Southwestern and South Central regions as both directors were absent. Joseph Adkins reported progress for the Southeastern region, where the drama groups "Are being organized through the State Teachers Association." He mentioned that Randolph Edmonds had addressed the Association meeting in Georgia.

Lois Turner of Fayetteville brought greetings to the SADSA from the Intercollegiate Dramatic Association and gave a full and interesting report for North Carolina where there were five preliminary festivals, one final festival and two clinics on the secondary level. She mentioned that the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts was mentioned at two of the preliminary festivals, at the final festival and at the clinic where four hundred students and eight-eight directors, superintendents and principals in forty-four schools were reached. She said that the SADSA Encores were presented to six different schools which showed interest and which Lois Turner listed as prospective members. Still on the bright side, Lois Turner said that "the North Carolina Teachers Association has raised $250.00 for a high school drama program and hopes to raise $500.00 next year. I hope to interest the association in subscribing $25.00 to the SADSA next year."

L. C. Archer, of Wilberforce, mentioned excellent relationship with Antioch College which has a stock company. Gladys Forde of Fisk, Benton Adams of Tennessee State, and Singer Buchanan of Lane reported no productions in their respective colleges. Fisk had traveled to Birmingham, Alabama, with Little Foxes; Adams had designed an auditorium scheduled for the proposed new school of humanities building; and

Buchanan had produced Angel Street at Lane College and had been invited to repeat the show at a local white college. A high light from the Nashville groups was that the Wesley Players of Scarritt College were carrying on an experiment at the Wesley Foundation with "intimate Drama" and an interracial audience. Under these circumstances, A Doll's House and The Silver Cord had both been successfully done during the past year.

Business matters of importance included several amendments and additions to the constitution and the consideration of the possibility of a change of name for the organization. Since there was not time to discuss adequately even in the Executive Committee the new additions proposed by the Committee on Constitution, those proposed in the 1949 conference were voted upon and after preliminary discussion the new additions were referred to the Committee on Constitution for reworking and subsequent presentation to members.

The amendments proposed at the 1949 conference and adopted at the 1950 conference in the following form were:

1. That Article II of the constitution concerning the purpose of the organization be amended so that part 4 shall read: "To stimulate interest in the writing and production of good plays," striking out the phrase "with an emphasis on those of Negro life."

2. That Article III Section A part 1 concerning membership be amended to read: "That member schools shall be:

    1. Any college, Normal school or high school or organization interested in Dramatic and Speech Arts.

3. That the phrase "our particular area in Article III Section A, part 1 be further clarified by adding Missouri and Ohio

to the states already named in the three areas, Missouri in the Southwestern and Ohio in the South Central region.

Note: At the Arkansas conference in 1947, Southeastern was defined as North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida; South Central as Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama; Southwestern as Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma.

Numbers one and two above were adopted as they appear here. Number three was adopted in substance but had to incorporated in different form since one of the changes in two was to omit the phrase "in our particular area."

There was considerable discussion of the possibility of a change of name for the organization in view of SADSA's wider functioning and progress in relationship with other organizations, but no agreement could be reached. Names suggested AADS: American Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts; ADSA: Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts; and NADSA: National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. It was voted, according to the report, to refer the matter to the Executive Committee for further consideration. The Executive Committee voted to poll the members after there had been full time for consideration of the matter. It was thought there might be other suggestions.

In accordance with the amendments to the constitution adopted in 1949, no new elections were in order this year for the offices of president, vice-president, and executive secretary. The Nominating Committee brought in the following slate of officers: Regional Directors: Southeastern region, Joseph Adkins, Fort Valley; South Central, E. A. Lomax, Tougaloo; Southwestern, Floyd Sandle, Grambling. Other officers were:

second vice-president (student), Alfonso Sherman, Tennessee State; third vice-president, Sara Rinehart, Arkansas State. The report of the nominating committee was received and adopted. But it was noted that Floyd Sandle of Grambling was not at the conference and Thomas Pawley's name was added for the Southwestern region. The four students whose names were added to the Executive Council through an authorized unanimous ballot by the secretary were: Theorore Brook, Tougaloo College, South Central region; Eudora Carr, Fort Valley State, Southeastern region; Gwendolyn Gregory, Fisk University, South Central region; and Laura Casey, Lincoln University, Southwestern region.

Before the meeting was adjourned, the members stood with bowed heads, the report stated, while a prayer was read In Memoriam to Helen Sceney Spaulding by Miss Laura M. Averitte of Tennessee State College. This was an impressive tribute to one whom many of the delegates remembered as a talented student at Tennessee State, and some remembered her as director of the Skyloft Players in Chicago and as an ambitious and attractive young woman devoted to an important piece of research on the work of The Amateur Negro Theatre.

The association received and accepted an invitation to hold its next annual conference at Alabama State College, Montgomery, Alabama.

Financially the new income at the 1950 conference was two hundred one dollars and nine cents, but because of advertisement income from the SADSA Encore in the 1949 and 1950 issues and the sale of the Encores, as well as the substantial backlog from the 1949 conference,

the association was still able to pay off the McQuiddy Printing Company the seven hundred sixty-four dollars and ninety seven cents and other incidentals, and then had a net balance of one hundred one dollars and seven cents.

The Fourteenth Annual Conference was adjourned.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION BECOMES THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

The Association, 1951 - 1959

The Fifteenth Annual Conference at Alabama State College, Montgomery, Alabama. The Fifteenth Annual Conference of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts may well be called a significant year in the history of this organization. It marked a change that many in the organization had deemed inevitable because of the association's "Expanding membership, philosophy, program of work, and services."[1] The 1951 conference, the fifteenth for the association, met at Alabama State College, in Montgomery, Alabama, May 2 - 5. The name of the association was changed at this conference from the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts to that of the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. According to the president's words about the association's change in its name one notes: "The change of our name was courageously faced by our membership."[2] There are some indications that in bringing about this change in name, "Sentimentality and regionalism faded into a united front with a stronger determination to develop one America and one world through the medium of dramatic art and other forms of communication."[3]

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[1] Report of Fifteenth Annual Conference, SADSA (1951), p. 1.

[2] Ibid., p. 1.

[3] Ibid., p. 2.

There had been considerable discussion of the possibility of a change of name for the organization at the fourteenth annual conference. And despite the words of the president at that time, that the organization "courageously faced" the change in its name, there were many sentiments to the contrary. No less a person than the organization's founder, S. Randolph Edmonds, was bitterly against the change in the name. There were officers who admitted that Randolph Edmonds did not take the change in name from The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts to The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts "courageously." It was reported that the president, Thomas Poag, had developed considerable sentiment for changing the association's name and that the founder, Randolph Edmonds, had developed considerable sentiment for keeping the name SADSA. It has also been fairly reliably reported that the matter had to be tabled the first time it came up because it seemed to be developing discord rather than harmony among the delegates. But at a subsequent session at this same conference the name was changed.

The theme of the conference at Alabama State College was: The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts In The Next Fifty Years. The secretary's report shows that of particular significance was the continued increase in student membership, participation and leadership; the increasing interest and participation of elementary and high school teachers and sponsors of Children's Theatre; the featuring of a demonstration debate and of demonstrations of acting and dance drama on the program; the inauguration of the "Get Acquainted

Luncheon," and conference dinner, pleasant family affairs, testifying to the speaking ability and interpretative talent in the organization and its excellent morale; the increasingly important role played by The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts in cooperation with ANTA, AETA, and the Southeastern Conference, "Especially in the election of our retiring president, Dr. Thomas E. Poag, to the presidency of the Southeastern Conference and the need for changing the name of the organization from the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts to The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts."[4]

Also of significance, seemingly, was the provision made by the Executive Council for a committee in charge of inaugurating and implementing the program projects for development in the next fifty years.

A high point in the program was the challenge brought by the conference speaker, Dr. Delwin Dusenbury of the University of Florida in his speech, "The Living Theatre, Our Responsibility."

The conference statistics show that one hundred and fifty-six persons were present from twelve states and twenty-six institutions (20 colleges, 4 high schools, 2 children's theatres). These were: Alabama State College; Tennessee Agriculture and Industrial State College; Alabama Agriculture and Mechanical College; Childress Vocational High School; Dillard University; Fayetteville Teachers College; Fort Valley State College; Fisk University; Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College; Famee Senior Children's Civic Theatre; Grambling College;

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[4]Ibid., p. 11.

Kentucky State College; Lincoln University; Langston University; North Carolina State College; Oxford Training School; Parker High School; Saint Jude High School; Samuel Huston College; Southern University; Talladega College; Tillotson College; Tougaloo College; Tuskegee Institute; Theatre for Wee Folk; and Johnson C. Smith University.

Seventeen collegiate, high school, and Children's Theatre groups participated in the play festival. Shows were scheduled for Thursday and Friday nights. But considerable drama was added to the whole conference, especially the play festival, when an unexpected storm of a rather devastating nature developed at festival time Thursday night, May 3. It seems that the Alabama State College campus, the SADSA conference included, was thrown into panic and confusion. But it appears that when order was restored at all other points on the campus, confusion remained in the ranks of the conference. The lights in the auditorium where the plays were scheduled to go on were out and remained off all that night. This necessitated a complete rearrangement of the program; however, the necessary adjustments were made by the host director, Mrs. Juanita Oubre and others, and a place for every play was found on the program.

The play festival included: Fort Valley State in Play Me No Carols; Florida A. and M. in Gangsters Over Harlem; Tennessee State Players in I Shall Be Waiting; and the Talladega Little Theatre in Our Town (the Graveyard Scene). These plays were shown at a Friday May 4 Matinee.

The Friday night shows included: Samuel Huston College in Smoke-Screen; Tillotson College Players in Progress; Lincoln University Stage-

crafters in Hello Out There; the Tougaloo College Dramatic Society in The Valiant; and the Grambling College Players in A Message From Khufu.

The Saturday plays included: The Fisk University Stagecrafters in Words and Music by Pierrot; the Dillard University Players in Riders to The Sea; and the Kentucky State Players in A Woman's Privilege. Alabama State, as host, did the one-act show, One of Us on this same bill of one-act shows.

The critics for the play festival were Dr. Dusenbury, the guest speaker, and Dr. M. F. Evans of Birmingham Southern College, who also spoke in the session on Speech Correction.

The critics commended the performances for the achievement of the purposes desired and for making the plays intelligible. They said they saw merit in the general level of excellence; the sincerity of the actors' work; the poise and maturity shown by the groups; and mentioned unusual capabilities in some actors who were outstanding. On the negative side attention was called to the need for more freedom for the actors, -- freedom which the directors might give them or help them to get; and need for discrimination between tension or coldness and intensity in the use of the voice in emotional scenes. It was suggested that there was need to learn the art of acting "all of one piece" or the coordination of the parts working with the whole; the need to rework some of the stage business for balance; the need to improve the diction for many of the plays; and the need to control the voice of some false emphasis which often threw some characters out of character.

The critic judges had to leave before the Saturday evening plays,

so that there were no comments on these productions. The conference report notes that "through an unfortunate coincidence, too many of the plays were prison plays, the type of circumstance we hope to be able to avoid in future planning."[5] The conference was enthusiastic about the work of the high schools and the Children's Theatre groups.

The high school and Children's Theatre demonstrations on Saturday afternoon, May 5 were of high quality and added much to the conference. The Theatre of Wee Folk in Selma, Alabama, directed by Gloria D. Maddox, gave a brief demonstration and dramatization of a folk tale. The director explained her work with the children. She pointed out that she meets the different age groups at her home three times per week and gives them informal training in speech with the help of a recording machine, and in creative dramatics, leading toward a series of public performances promoted by the children and their parents which had proved very successful. Lillian Voorhees said of Mrs. Maddox and her work:

> Mrs. Maddox is especially interested in the possibilities for the dramatization of folk literature with the children. She is one of those who came up in the organization in their undergraduate experiences in college.[6]

The Parker High School of Birmingham, Alabama presented Madame Butterfly under the direction of Robert Jones. The account states that this play was "timed to the second and very smoothly executed."

Another high school group, the Oxford Amateur Dramatic Society,

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[5] Ibid., p. 3.

[6] Ibid., p. 4.

Oxford, Mississippi, presented The Darkest Hour. This group was directed by Yolanda E. Sephus.

The secretary said in her report about the next play, a Children's Theatre production:

> The Wedding of Peer Gynt, adapted from Ibsen's Peer Gynt and directed by Mrs. Irene Edmonds of the Famcee Senior Children's Civic Theatre was nothing short of an achievement. The adaptation itself is extraordinary and the performance was executed with spirit and fineness by the twenty-six children participating. The music, the dancing, the costuming as well as the movement of the script highlighted the story with admirable unity and effectiveness.[7]

A unique feature of the fifteenth annual session was the "Get Together" Luncheon on Thursday noon with its series of toasts presided over by M. B. Tolson as toastmaster. The toasts included: (1) To Our Negro Playwrights, Dr. Thomas E. Pawley, Lincoln; (2) To Our Second Generation of Directors, Thomas E. Poag, Tennessee; (3) To Actors in the Negro Educational Theatre, Joseph Adkins, Fort Valley; (4) To Our Drama Students, Madelyn Brewer, Graduate Student, Tennessee; (5) To Our High School Theatre, Floyd L. Sandle, Grambling; (6) To Our Children's Theatre, Gloria D. Maddox, Theatre of the Wee Folk; (7) To Our Membership, Helen F. Holmes, Kentucky; (8) To Our Hosts, Lillian W. Voorhees, Fisk. Randolph Edmonds of Florida also spoke briefly to this group. Thomas Pawley had had to substitute for Randolph Edmonds at the beginning of the program.

The opening discussion of the conference was on Thursday afternoon,

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[7] Ibid., p. 4.

May 3, at which time the chairman of the Playwrighting Committee, Randolph Edmonds, presented to the group the results of the 1950-'51 playwrighting contest. He noted that fourteen entries of scripts had been received,--more than the year before. The judges, Dr. Ann Cook of Howard University, Mr. Joseph Hill of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, and Mr. Robert Schnitzer of New York City, agreed, he said, that no plays were of sufficient merit to receive the awards. However, the chairman of the committee felt encouraged that the form had improved, that there were conflicts in character present in the plays, and that they were written for the stage,--qualities lacking in many of the scripts in the previous contest for which no award was made, Because of the disappointment occasioned by no award in the first contest and for the encouragement of the contestants, Edmonds submitted the plays to a local committee of the English staff at Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College who rated the plays as follows:

1st. Death Come Creeping In The Room by Grant Moss, Tillotson College, Austin, Texas.

2nd. Golden Gloves by Alice Marie Durham, Wilberforce College, Wilberforce, Ohio.

3rd. Play Me No Carols by Lonnie L. Napier, Fort Valley State College, Fort Valley, Georgia.

Honorable Mention, The Tam by Vilma Howard, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee.

Honorable Mention, The Cotton Curtain by Frank J. Greenwood, 1261 East 57th Street, Los Angeles, California.

In commenting on the plays, Edmonds mentioned that the chief difficulty seemed to be that the art of building up a plot was not

understood by the young playwrights. He mentioned that the contest for 1951-'52 would be launched earlier and that the announcements were ready for circulation. Suggestions followed for methods by which better plays might be submitted. They were: Encourage students to study playwriting; the committee might criticize the plays and return them for rewriting; there might be a session at the conference devoted to the production of experimental plays--so labeled; playwrights might comprise one of the panels for discussion at the conference; there might be experimental productions of the plays early in the conference session with criticism from the audience; there might be more experimental productions of original plays on the various campuses to get ready to write better plays; the conference should include a Workshop in Playwriting; and it would help to set up objectives. The prizes are not sufficient to get the quality of plays wanted.

There was a demonstration in Acting and a Dance Drama demonstration. An acting demonstration of Farce Comedy in the Arena in a scene from Blithe Spirit by Noel Coward was presented by the Lincoln Stagecrafters under the direction of Thomas Pawley. Pawley outlined the characteristics of arena playing in introducing the scene: intimacy in closeness to audience; movement with relation to audience and foursided stage space; playing without benefit of distance or elevation of stage for illusion; lighting, make-up and costuming modified to suit the situation; limitation in height and character of suitable properties; modes of entrance and exit and substitution of blackout or some other device for curtain.

As for the dance drama demonstration, several demonstrations of what might be done in dance movements to the rhythm of verse were given by Dillard University students under the direction of Frances Perkins. It was found that the audience was chiefly impressed with the variety of movement possible and the originality shown. Some members of the audience felt that it would be more effective to have the verses spoken by a chorus or reader rather than by the dancer; but the performers argued for a higher degree of coordination when they spoke the verses themselves.

The session on Technical Problems had as its chairman Benton Adams of Tennessee Agriculture and Industrial State College. Other discussants on this problem were Val Dora Frazier, Florida, and Frances Perking of Dillard. Adams stressed the importance of learning to draw for scene design; Mrs. Frazier emphasized the necessity of practice with lighting design, especially color lighting; and Miss Perkins who, like many other directors, has had to produce plays on stages far from ideal, declared "there is no such thing as can't." During the discussion period attention was called to an M. A. thesis being written by a student at A. and I. State College based upon experimentation with lighting gelatines and containing some interesting discoveries about lighting dark complexions.

In another session, Professor Elisha B. James of Alabama State College was in charge of demonstrations on the use of Audio-Visual Aids at Alabama's Communications Laboratory. He concluded that the tape recorder, connected with radio, and the filmstrip projector are the two most valuable pieces of Audio-Visual Equipment.

There was noted an interesting discussion by students, led by a student from A. and I. State College, Alfonso Sherman, on Job Opportunities in Speech and Dramatics.

An exhibition debate, under the direction of Willis N. Pitts was held. Pitts and his debators were from Lincoln University. Their subject was: Resolved, that the non-Communist Nations of the world should form a new international organization. The form used was the Michigan modification of the Oregon cross-examination debate. In this plan, the main speeches are followed by periods of cross-examination by a member of the opposing team. Pitts pointed out that the advantage of this type of debate is that it offers a greater challenge to students by putting them on their mettle during the course of the debate in selling and defending their ideas. The arguments were well-marshalled and soundly supported. The only weakness of the debate was that there was not enough rivalry since all debators came from the same school; and there was not enough time for audience participation.

There was a Speech Correction session led by Floreice May of Tuskegee. Dr. Evans of Birmingham Southern was the consultant. It is reported that the consultant pointed out that "the approach had to be made in the clinical work done in our colleges, but that we also need to do something with the public school teachers."[8] He noted that ten per cent of the children in public schools have some deviation in speech

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[8]Ibid., p. 7.

ranging from slight to very serious ones; and that the teacher can do much to help the less serious defects if she understands how.

Sam Geralds told of his experiences in working on the problem of Speech Correction in Louisiana. Geralds was working with the Louisiana State Department of Education and with Southern University. He pointed out that the percentage of deficiencies is higher in the Negro public schools than in the white schools. He said "Louisiana is putting on a campaign to get people interested in getting training."[9] The program in Louisiana in Speech Correction, according to Geralds, has two phases: The training of teachers, not as specialists but basically, through workshops and through conferences with teachers throughout the state; and work on defective hearing with simple hearing tests.

In the session on Speech Education in the Curriculum, introduced by Miss Barlowe* of the English department of Alabama State College, many methods were mentioned to meet the needs of speech education in the high school. Good examples from the teacher were stressed; emphasis on fundamentals; use of discussion methods; choral reading; and debating and parliamentary procedure.

In this same discussion, Granville Sawyer of Samuel Huston College stated that "Speech problems of Negroes grow out of inconsistencies in their speech situation in society."[10] He stressed the fact that effective college work must be based on good procedure in the home and on the ele-

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[9] Ibid., p. 8

[10] Ibid., p. 8.

*No first name is given in the minutes.

mentary and high school levels. Sawyer described the approach he was using in his clinic with the design of getting persons to want to speak better and thereby assuring complete cooperation. He had some pictures to exhibit to the conference delegates attending this session, which testified to the success of his method used in his clinic.

Lillian Voorhees of Fisk led the session on choral speaking. Miss Voorhees demonstrated and outlined some possibilities in choral speaking through use of different kinds of materials. She demonstrated some of these with the conference group impromptu fashion. A number of the delegates who attended this fifteenth annual conference attested to the fact that this all-delegate participation in the choral speaking demonstration was a "great deal of fun for all."

In the business sessions the conference received the reports from the president of the association; the executive secretary; the field representative; the publicity director; the editor of Encore; the regional directors; the nominating committee; and the resolutions committee.

President Poag's report, dealt chiefly with the organization's relations with other organizations. He, along with Lillian Voorhees, had represented SADSA on the Advisory Council of AETA. Thomas Poag was retiring as president of SADSA but had been elected as president of the Southeastern Theatre Conference, an honor which the delegates to SADSA felt he had worked for and deserved.

The secretary's report showed that resolutions for the National Theatre Assembly were drawn up,--the chief import of which was to safeguard in the assembly the rights and privileges of minority groups.

The proposed budget was presented by the executive secretary and adopted. It called for an income and expenditure of nineteen hundred and forty-dollars. This was based on an expectation of twenty-five sustaining members, fifty organizational members, thirty regular members and fifty student members, three hundred dollars from advertisements, three hundred dollars from sales of Encore and three hundred dollars from door receipts at the conference. This report showed income and expenditures with a balance on hand April 30, 1951 of two hundred eight dollars and forty-one cents. This officer presented a bill for twenty-one dollars and seventy-four cents for postage and mailing expense and telegrams.

The Field Representative's report included suggestions which he had circulated for the association's expanding program. The suggestions and projects included: An effort to interest people of all races in the development and integration of the Negro Theatre into the cultural life of America; efforts to enlist educational associations and teachers' organizations as organizational members of The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts; efforts to institute awards for persons who have done the most for the advancement of the Negro in Legitimate drama, motion pictures, radio, musical productions, university and school theatre, and the like; efforts to promote the organization of Children's Theatre in all large schools and communities; efforts to promote the incorporation of speech training in all schools and colleges, especially in the large elementary and high schools; and efforts to initiate a

Negro Drama Week, probably during March which is International Theatre Month. It was expected, according to the secretary's report, that that the suggestions and projects mentioned by the field representative would be considered by the Committee of Special Projects, headed by Thomas Pawley.

Two bills were presented by the field representative for expenses in discharge of the work of that office, totalling twenty-five dollars and eighty-six cents.

The Publicity Director, Helen Holmes, reported that only two bulletins had been issued for the year because of the difficulty of getting material--news and other items of interest from member schools.

She submitted a bill from the office of duplications at Kentucky State for forty-two dollars and seventy-five cents, the expense of publishing the two bulletins.

Reports from the regional directors showed some improvement in activity, especially in the South Central region, E. A. Lomax, director. Lomax reported that twenty high schools in Mississippi were listed to be visited with the purpose of organizing high school dramatic clubs; selecting plays for high school groups; giving "pep" talks to high school groups and dramatic directors about the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. He mentioned that eight high schools had been visited and clubs organized at Greenville, Clarksdale, Corinth, Brookhaven, Meridian, Gulfport, Biloxi, and Moss Point. The plan was to divide Mississippi into three sections with centers possibly at Greenville, Brookhaven, and Biloxi. One club from each center would come to Tougaloo for a night of high school drama and one club would

be invited to the regional festival to present a play. The director said the plan could not be carried out fully because of the terrific ice storm early in 1951 which paralyzed this section as well as other sections of the country. He did feel that "seeds of interest" had been sown for a state festival in 1951-1952. Lomax suggested that letters inviting high schools to participate in the organization might be sent from the executive secretary, especially to the principals. He thought of this as a means of paving the way for the work of regional directors. He stated that he would cooperate by getting and sending the names of principals and directors in the Mississippi high schools.

Joseph Adkins of the Southeastern region reported that circular letters had been distributed soliciting high school memberships but that high school organizations had little money for memberships. He did report that twenty-five dollars had been contributed by the Georgia Education Association and that he had served as judge in several high school play tournaments.

From the Southwestern region, Thomas Pawley reported that reports had been received from only three colleges in the region,--Southern, Dillard and Lincoln. Southern had had no public performances during the season; Dillard reported a very extensive program, including three major productions and one program of three one-act plays with audiences averaging 325. Lincoln had concluded its tenth anniversary season with three major productions; exchange productions with Arkansas State and Philander Smith Colleges and a tour of the near Southwest. Willis Pitts

had been added to the staff at Lincoln as Assistant Professor of English and director of Debating and had carried on a vigorous program of forensics.

The president named the following conference committees to report at the final business meeting on Saturday, May 5: A Nominating Committee, to name one candidate for vice-president and one candidate for executive secretary-elect. The committee was composed of Joseph Adkins, chairman; Helen Holmes; Alfonso Sherman; M. B. Tolson; M. Cosey. The Student Nominating Committee to name one student candidate each for second vice-president and one candidate from each of the three regions and one-at-large for representation on the executive committee. Roger Askey of Fisk was named chairman; and it included, Mary Carol Webb, Fort Valley; Ora Myers, Lincoln; and Madelyn Brewer, Tennessee State. A Resolutions Committee was named. It included M. B. Tolson, Langston, chairman; Laura Averitte, Tennessee; Floyd Sandle, Grambling; and Frances Perkins, Dillard.

The constitution was waived by the vote of those present for the purpose of providing for the election of an executive secretary-elect who could be in training in advance of April, 1952, when he would take office.

At the final business meeting on Saturday afternoon, May 5, it was necessary to declare a quorum by vote of those present as so few were present.

Reports were brought in by the nominating committee. Joseph Adkins

brought the report for his committee which named Thomas Pawley for vice-president and Willis Pitts for executive secretary-elect. The report was accepted. The student nominating committee named for second vice-president, Sinclair Lewis, Tougaloo; for third vice-president, Dorothy Wyatt, Fisk; for members of the Executive Council, Southeastern region, Daniel McPhanel, Fort Valley; South Central region, Luvercia McCormick, Tougaloo; Southwestern region, Robert Phillips, Lincoln; member-at-large, Harry Bailey, Florida. There were no other nominations and the report was accepted.

James Hopson, the association's new president had had to leave before this final meeting and could not be present to receive the chair from the retiring president, Thomas Poag. Thomas Pawley, the newly elected vice-president took over for Hopson. He expressed for the organization its appreciation of Thomas Poag's long and faithful service and presented him on behalf of his colleagues with two drama books for his library as a token of the association's appreciation. The ovation that followed was proof of the genuine appreciation felt by the association.

In the executive secretary's report it was noted that returns from the poll of mailed ballots on change of name for the association were indicisive though the membership vote clearly indicated that there was a desire for some change in name. This matter was settled at this conference. The name of the organization was changed from The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts to the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. It was voted after some "heated" debate, in

consideration of the expanding program and geographical spread of the organization and in consideration of its representation in other organizations, to change the name of the organization from The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts to The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. The change took effect at the end of the fiscal year, October 1, 1951, "When new stationery was printed and the new membership drive began."

At the final executive session on May 5, 1951, the following appointments were made in accordance with the provision in the constitution: Field Representative, Randolph Edmonds, Florida; publicity director, Florence May, Tuskegee; Editor of the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts Encore, Thomas Poag, Tennessee; Regional directors, Southeastern region, Joseph Adkins, Fort Valley; South Central region, E. A. Lomax, Tougaloo; Southwestern, Granville Sawyer, Samuel Houston.

It was voted that members should be polled by means of a check list to discover on what committees they wished to work. Also, it was voted to invite presidents of High School and Regional Organizations in Speech and Drama to become members of the association and have representation on the Council with a fee of ten dollars.

Upon being notified of her appointment as Publicity Director, Florence May felt obliged to decline because of health and heavy teaching schedule. Elsie VanNess of LeMoyne was nominated and consented to serve.

The meeting was adjourned.

The Sixteenth Annual Conference at Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri. The Sixteenth Annual Conference of The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts met at Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri, April 1 - 4, 1952. It was noted from the report[11] that NADSA made its debut, the name of the organization having been changed by vote of the members at the fifteenth annual conference at Montgomery--from The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts to the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. Under the skillful management of the host director and vice-president, Thomas D. Pawley, and in the atmosphere of cordial hospitality extended by Lincoln University, the debut was a notable one.

The theme of the conference was Better Human Relations Through Better Communication, which served as an excellent stimulus for the sectional meetings and discussions. The convention address was given by Dr. Bernard Hewitt of the University of Illinois at the general meeting on Thursday morning on the subject "Truth, Faith, and The Theatre." Dr. Hewitt together with Dr. Harold Crain of the University of Iowa also served as critic judge for the play festival. Other visiting leaders and consultants were Morton Offutt of Central Missouri State Teachers College, Anita Lyons of the public schools of Kansas City, Missouri, and Charlotte Wells of the University of Missouri in the field of Speech Correction; Elmer Bladow and Donovan Rhynsburger of the University of Missouri Workshop in the field of Technical Production;

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[11] Report of Executive Secretary, Sixteenth Annual Conference of the NADSA (April 1 - 4, 1952), p. 1.

C. A. Blue of Lincoln University and Gilbert Rau of Central Missouri State Teachers College in Discussion and Debating; and C. C. Damel of Lincoln University and Kensinger Jones of Station KSD, St. Louis, in Radio and Television.

The report showed that twenty-three institutions or organizations from twelve states were represented in the delegations of one hundred and eight persons. There were twelve colleges, two high schools and one children's theatre. These were: Arkansas State College; Alabama Agriculture and Mechanical College; Alabama State College; Albany State College; Central State College, Dillard University; Fayetteville State Teachers College; Fayetteville, North Carolina; Fisk University; Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College; Fort Valley College; Grambling College; Hudson High School; Jackson College; Kentucky State College; Langston University; LeMoyne College; Lincoln University; St. Louis University; Talladega College; Washington Technical High School; Theatre of Wee Folk; and Huston-Tillotson.

Discussion Sessions and Demonstrations. A new feature of the 1952 conference was double sections of the conference sessions, necessitating a choice between two sessions representing different interests and scheduled at the same hour. Each session was assigned a secretary whose duty it was to take notes and report the discussion of the session to the executive secretary. This was evidence that the conference had grown large enough for the double sectioning. It proved desirable and workable.

The Wednesday sections included: Speech Education and Speech Cor-

rection. The subject for this discussion was, "What Every Grade School Teacher Needs to Know About Speech Correction."

The discussion on Technical Production, had as its subject, "Technical Problems of The Arena Theatre."

The group in Discussion and Debating discussed the subject, "Techniques of Group Dynamics."

The discussion on Acting and Directing had no central topic, but discussed problems as varied as those of casting; place and time for rehearsal; equipment and use of the auditorium; length of rehearsals; and administrative support.

The Thursday sessions included: Producing and Writing New Plays. This discussion was one of the high spots of the conference. The panel members included Dr. Bernard Hewitt, Dr. Harold Crain, Randolph Edmonds, and Donovan Rhynsburger, who discussed the question, "How Can We Get More and Better Plays Written?" Mr. Rhynsburger spoke of his experiences with contests where the best five plays submitted were presented as an award. He pointed out specific difficulties encountered by young playwrights: (1) trying to write about something for which the writer had no background; (2) too little climax in the plot; (3) too general and too broad crises; (4) shallow devices in manipulating the play; (5) too many crises, and too close together; (6) characters lacking motivation; (7) too long speeches not constructed for climatic purposes; (8) dialogue not characteristic without flavor; and (9) lack of knowledge of the limits and potentialities of the stage. He concluded that it is best to encourage students to write about situations they know and if possible to draw upon

regional material for dramatic situations.

Harold Crain of the University of Iowa discussed the practice at that University of substituting playwriting for theses. He pointed out that the difficulty in getting people to write plays is greater than with any other creative form. He mentioned as means to get beginners to write: (1) a course in playwriting, and (2) getting some kind of hearing either at a playwright's reading with a cast selected for reading with interested listeners or in the production of the play for a fairly select audience.

Dernard Hewitt pointed out that new plays were not being written because the incentive was missing and conditions for learning were nonexistant. Money awards, he commented, are not an adequate incentive. The playwright needs sympathetic guidance and the best place to get this guidance is in a good course. But informal processes of encouragement are also needed as audiences have to be educated for the reception of new scripts. Playwrights, he said, need to acquire "a corps of resistance." He called attention to a new provision in the Manuscript Play Project sponsored by the American Educational Theatre Association whereby playwrights may get criticism of their plays and have them returned for rewriting.

Also, at the Thursday session a student group discussed, "What Human Relationships are Involved in the Essentials of Drama?"

Two other sections discussed problems in Community Drama based on the subject, "Community Activities in Memphis," and Speech and Drama in the Elementary School, the subject being "Why Should Every Classroom Teacher in the Elementary School be a Teacher of Speech and Drama?"

In the Business Meeting proposals and suggestions were made to raise the organization membership fee to $12.50 or $15.00, sustaining fee to $10.00, and regular fee to $5.00 and student fee to $2.00. These came from Thomas Poag, Editor of the Encore, and Lillian Voorhees, outgoing Executive Secretary.

A report was made on the place of the conference's 1953 meeting. Tennessee State had originally been voted on as the site for this meeting, but since Tennessee had already committed its facilities to entertain the Southeastern Conference this same year it was thought best to go to another school in 1953 and to Tennessee in 1954. The shift to Florida A. and M. was voted tentatively, pending word from Florida's Administration. The director, Randolph Edmonds, thought it would be acceptable and said Florida would guarantee $350 as conference proceeds when the association met there. The meeting did go to Florida A. and M. in 1953.

The financial report at the Lincoln Conference showed:

Total Receipts at conference	$593.00
Assets after conference from ads	153.00
Total Assets	829.41
Expenditures after conference	636.34
Balance, October 1, 1952	$193.07

Productions at the play festival. The play festival was opened by

an excellent production of All My Sons by the Lincoln University Stagecrafters on Wednesday night, April 2. Eleven colleges participated in the one-act play festival on Thursday night, April 3, Friday afternoon and Friday night, April 4 as follows: The Arkansas A. and M. Spotlighters presented The Grant's Stairs; The Tennessee State Players, Winter Sunset; Florida A. and M., Dregs; Fort Valley State, A Marriage Has Been Arranged, and Kentucky State, Counted Out.

Talladega College presented Mooney's Kid Don't Cry; Central State Players, Golden Gloves; Famcee Playmaker's Guild, Before Breakfast; the Grambling College Players Guild, A Light From St. Agnes; the Alabama A. and M. Thespians, Suppressed Desires; the LeMoyne College Players, When the Sun Rises; and the Fisk University Stagecrafters, Modesty.

A special feature of the conference was the Luncheon-Banquet. The toast of the occasion was given by Lillian Voorhees. The title of the toast was Sixteen Years of the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. It was presented against a background of NADSA'S development. Three aspects of development was suggested: (1) Organizational development including the age of the Founding Fathers or directors meeting to share problems, 1936; the beginning of the play festival idea in 1937; regional organizations and exchanges in 1938; rise of student leadership and participation, 1939; and the growth of more professional attitudes in the years following, with Playwrighting Contests, and annual and finally a change of name with members spread over the United States, and (2) the quality of plays produced over the years and the quality

of production, including original plays like Yellow Fever by Randolph Edmonds, The Cave of Winds by C. Van Jordan, and Tchekoff classics through moderns as diverse as Thornton Wilder, Noel Coward and Paul Green. The full length plays by host colleges to the conference including three originals: the premier of the Amistad by Owen Dodson, Prometheus and The Atom and Earth and Stars both by Randolph Edmonds: Death Takes A Holiday; Our Town; The Song of Bernadette; Candida; Deep Are The Roots; and All My Sons; and (3) the leaders of the past and the future: The first president, Randolph Edmonds, 1936-1942; the second president, Thomas E. Poag, 1942-1951; John M. Ross, chairman of the committee that wrote the constitution; and the incumbent officers, James O. Hopson, president and Thomas Pawley, vice-president.

The records show that the toast as given by Miss Voorhees was received by the delegates attending the Luncheon-Banquet as being one of the featured events of the season.

The conference was adjourned until the next conference.

The Seventeenth Annual Conference at Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College. Florida A. and M. College was the scene of the 1953 conference. Highlights of the opening general sessions were addresses by Dr. Bryllion Fagen of John Hopkins University; Dr. Samuel Selden of the University of North Carolina; and the speech of welcome by the president of Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College, Dr. George W. Gore, Jr.

The theme of the conference was "Drama, Speech and the Humanities." For the first time in the history of the association its president,

James O. Hopson, was absent. No other president had ever missed a meeting. Hopson's reason for being absent was because of pressing school business at Talladega College. However, the genial atmosphere created by the host school group headed by the host director, Randolph Edmonds, the able direction of vice-president Thomas Pawley, and the enthusiastic endeavor of school groups in attendance made the conference a success.

The conference report[12] shows a number of discussion topics for the conference. They were: "What is the Value of Producing the Classics Today?" "Speech and Drama in the Junior College," "Children's Theatre as an Introduction to the Fine Arts," "Recent Investigations Into the Cause and Therapy of Stuttering," "Production Techniques in Television," "Speech, Drama and Theatre in the Humanities Program," "Drama as a Means of Developing Cultural Horizons in the High Schools," "Speech, Drama and English: Integration or Separation," and "Is College Debating a Lost Art?"

Representatives from fifteen colleges were in attendance to discuss those topics. These colleges were: Alabama Agriculture and Mechanical College; Alabama State College; Bethune-Cookman College; Fisk University; Florida Agriculture and Mechanical College; Fort Valley State College; Grambling College; Jackson College; Knoxville College; Lincoln University; North Carolina College; Savannah State College; Tennessee Agriculture

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[12]Report of the Executive Secretary, Seventeenth Annual Conference of the NADSA (March 29-31, 1953), p. 5.

and Industrial State University; Tuskegee Institute; and Arkansas State College. The only feeling about the discussions was that there just was not enough time to do justice to all the fine topics. The host director had not only secured the services of Dr. Selden and Dr. Gagan, the guest consultants, but he had also engaged such local and state consultants as Dr. Carl Ainsworth from Florida State University, Mr. Robert Gates of the Florida State Department of Education, and Dr. Robert Miller of the University of Florida.

On Sunday night March 29 the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts play festival was opened with the Famcee Playmakers Guild presenting Simon and Cyrene, written and directed by Randolph Edmonds. On Monday morning, March 30 at 10:00 A. M. the Children's Theatre Production, The Two Kings and the Nutcracker, dramatized by Irene C. Edmonds was presented by the Famcee Creative Children's Theatre under the direction of the author.

The plays in the Monday night play festival included: The Alabama State Players in He's Dead All Right; the Fisk Stagecrafters in The Twelve Pound Look; the Grambling College Players in Minor Miracle; and the Lincoln University Stagecrafters in a scene from Therese.

The Tuesday afternoon, March 31, shows included Jackson College in Roll, Sweet Chariot; and the North Carolina College Players in a scene from Antigone.

The Tuesday evening, March 31 shows included the Tuskegee Institute Players in High Window; the Alabama A. and M. Thespians in George; the

Fort Valley State Players in Mooncalf Mugford; and the Tennessee State Players in Cloudburst.

In the business sessions major emphasis was placed on the organization's financial situation and ability to meet future obligations. Ways and means of keeping the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts Encore despite its expense were suggested and discussed.

A vital question raised by Randolph Edmonds concerned the possibility that the organization had outlived its usefulness. The general feeling among the delegates was that the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts still offered the best student outlet among the Negro colleges and universities. It was felt and so stated by Lillian Voorhees "that duplication of similar organization work could not be changed in light of the fact that we are not thoroughly integrated."[13] It was Dr. Poag's feeling or suggestion that "The ANTA movement may eventually take over as the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts members become more and more integrated in the larger organization."[14]

Motions to make no play awards retroactively for the year 1950-'51 and for the year 1951-'52 were adopted. And in connection with Playwriting Contest, the question was raised of the possibility of obtaining a possible grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to support playwriting. However, it was thought that seeking a grant to support the total program was a better move for future consideration.

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[13] Ibid., p. 4.

[14] Ibid., p. 4.

Officers elected at the 1953 conference were: president, Thomas Pawley, Lincoln; vice-president, Floyd Sandle, Grambling; second vice-president, Gloria Jackson, Florida; third vice-president, Moses Gunn, Tennessee; executive secretary, Willis Pitts, Tennessee; editor of NADSA bulletin, Mary Bohannon, North Carolina; field representative and honorary president, Randolph Edmonds; liaison member, Lois Turner, Fayetteville.

= Regional directors were: Jospeh Adkins, Fort Valley, Southeastern; Gloria B. Evans, Jackson College, South Central; and Eddie Williams, Grambling, Southwestern region.

The financial report at the 1953 conference:

Total conference and other collections	$661.00
Total bank balance brought forward	118.26
Total on hand at conference time	779.26
Total expenditures including payment of NADSA bill	683.30
Balance (October, 1953)	95.96
Outstanding obligation: indebtedness, NADSA Encore	$200[15]

The Eighteenth Annual Conference at Tennessee Agriculture and Industrial State University, Nashville, Tennessee. The scene of the 1954 conference was Tennessee A. and I. State University in Nashville, Tennessee. The stage was set for a big conference and it was just that. Host director Thomas E. Poag had invited everybody and everybody accepted.

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[15]Note: The members of the association were constantly reminded by the Executive Secretary that their financial problem was the NADSA Encore.

The conference statistics show[16] that twenty-two colleges were on hand, from eleven states, with a total of 163 delegates. These colleges included: Alabama Agriculture and Mechanical College; Alabama State College; Albany State College; Bethune-Cookman College; Central State College; Clark College; Fayetteville State Teachers College; Fisk University; Florida Agriculture and Mechanical University; Fort Valley State College; Grambling College; Jackson College; Kentucky State College; Knoxville College; Langston University; LeMoyne College; Lincoln University; Mississippi Vocational State College; Savannah State College; Spelman College; Tuskegee Institute; and Tennessee Agriculture and Industrial State University.

The conference had as its theme: "Ways and Means of Improving The Speech and Drama Program in the Hydrogen Age." A total of eight consultants had been invited to lend their talents to the delegates. These outstanding consultants were: Mr. Clarence Derwent of ANTA and Actors' Equity; Mr. Brad Crandall and Miss Marjorie Cooney, both of WSM-TV; Mr. Edward Cole of Yale University, ANTA and AETA; Mrs. Ruth Campbell, Drama critic of the Nashville Tennessean; Dr. Freeman McConnell of Vanderbilt University; and Dr. Philip N. Hood of Vanderbilt University. Mr. Clarence Derwent was the guest speaker for the general assembly program on Thursday morning, April 29.

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[16] Report of the Executive Secretary, The NADSA Conference, Nashville, Tennessee (April 28 - 30, 1954)., p. 2.

The play festival, the main feature of this conference, was begun on Wednesday night, April 28, when the Tennessee State Players presented Arthur Miller's Death Of A Salesman.

The one-act play festival that followed on Thursday night and Friday night featured: LeMoyne College in The Acid Test; Fisk University in the third act of Ghosts; Mississippi Vocational College in The Other Side; Alabama A. and M. in Women's Ward; Knoxville College in Make-Up; Florida A. and M. in Bad Man; Alabama State College in The Sun Is A Dean Man's Weapon; Central State in The Theatre of the Soul; Fort Valley in The Other One; Grambling College in On Vengeance Height; Clark College in Rosalind; and Lincoln University in The Infernal Machine.

The following topics were discussed at the sectional meetings: "Problems of the Teacher," and "Problems of the Student." The student forum discussed the question, "What can be done to Build and Improve Road Audiences?" Also discussed at sectional meetings were: "Improving the Children's Theatre Program in Schools, Colleges and Universities," "Radio and Television in the College Program," "Problems in Theatre Architecture," "The Type of Play for the new Playwright," "Therapy and Methodology for use in Public Schools," "Writing for Radio and Television." Further sectional discussions dealth with, "Disorders of Articulation," "The Problem of Voice," "Problems in Hearing," and "Disorders of Articulation;" "Relationship of the Educational and Community Theatres," "Administering the High School Drama Program," and "The Community Theatre as a Curricular or Extra-Curricular Problem in Theatre."

It was noted that several schools brought large delegations to the conference and it was possible for several discussions to run at the same time.

The conference luncheon was the outstanding social event. For this event Mr. Edward Cole of Yale was the featured speaker. Another outstanding social event was the dinner for the directors at the home of Tennessee's President, Dr. and Mrs. Walter A. Davis.

The report shows that executive committee sessions held during the conference provided interesting and important NADSA points for consideration. The minutes of the December, 1953 executive committee meeting held in New York, in connection with SAA, were adopted. A nominating committee was appointed to select officers for an executive secretary and to select regional directors. This committee recommended and had approved the following slate of officers: Regional directors, South Central region, J. Preston Cochran, Alabama A. and M.; Southwestern region, Eddie R. Williams, Grambling College; and Southeastern region, Lois P. Turner, Fayetteville State College. Ester Jackson of Clark College was elected Editor of the Newsletter and director of publicity for 1954-1955. By common consent, the acting editor of Encore, Thomas Poag and Encore business manager, James Randolph, were returned to office for 1954-1955. The approved slate of student officers for NADSA in 1954-1955 were as follows: second vice-president, Moses Gunn, Tennessee; third vice-president, Shirley White, Lincoln. The student representatives for the regions were: Albertha Nelson, Florida; Southeastern region; Kenneth Guthrie, Central State, South Centra; and Raymond Bryant, Grambling,

Southwestern, Marion Woodard of LeMoyne was approved as representative-at-large and Mattie Harper of Alabama A. and M. was appointed to the special projects committee.

Also, by common consent in executive session a budget was adopted for Encore. Budget requests, beginning with the coming year 1954-1955, were directed to be in the hands of the executive secretary in February prior to the conference date.

The president of the association's report was perhaps the strongest and most objective of any report given by any president. He was reporting on what he termed the needs of the organization. Thomas Pawley was the president. This is his report to the conference:

During my first year of tenure as president I have become convinced that the president does not have enough to do to keep him busy after the Annual Conference . . . . Consequently with so much free time I have been able to think a great deal about the problems and needs of NADSA. As I see it we have four major needs: (1) A tightening and strengthening of administrative policies and procedures, (2) a stronger financial base, (3) a year around program designed to keep up in contact with one another and to meet the needs of students and teachers of speech and drama in Negro Colleges, and (4) an expanded professional membership.

President Pawley also recommended: (1) Raising the cost of both regular and student memberships, (2) a membership campaign conducted through the regional directors, (3) formulation of a regular exchange

play program with cash guarantees among member colleges, (4) inclusion of forensic and discussion tournaments as a part of the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts' program and (5) consideration of limiting or separating the play festival from the conference.

In leading up to these recommendations Dr. Pawley had said:

> I am firmly convinced that we must broaden our program to give greater emphasis to the speech arts. We are still predominately a theatre organization. The play festival consumes most of our energies during the three days we come together. We are unique in this respect and perhaps we wish to continue the idea of both a Conference and a Play Festival. But I believe the time has come to re-examine the basic philosophy underlying this dual effort. I believe there needs to be more professional activity: demonstrations, clinics, critical papers, panels. In other words, I believe we should become a more professional organization.[17]

The regional directors gave very complete reports this time. Notable among the reports were those given by J. Preston Cochran (Alabama Agriculture and Mechanical College) of the South Central region; and Eddie R. Williams (Grambling) of the Southwestern region. Both reports indicated a wealth of activity in those two regions and the college level, and Williams' report also showed a considerable amount of speech and dramatic activities at the high school level, with Southern University and Grambling College sharing in the promotion.

The playwriting contest was won by Cordelia Campbell, Alabama A. and M. first place; Ramona A. Jones, Fisk, second place; and Allen C. Sibbly, Fort Valley, third place.

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[17] Ibid., p. 9.

Financial report for the 1954 conference:

Balance on hand	$191.13
Total Conference monies	685.50
Total on Hand	876.63
Total conference expenditures	166.65
Balance in NADSA Treasury, June 1954	709.98*[18]

The Nineteenth Annual Conference at Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia. The 1955 NADSA conference met at Atlanta, Georgia, at the invitation of the joint hosts, Atlanta University, Clark College, Morehouse College, Morris Brown College, and Spelman College. In response to the speech of welcome from the president of Atlanta University, the NADSA's president, Thomas Pawley said "I feel certain that the entrance of the Atlanta Colleges into full participation in NADSA marks the beginning of a new ara in our professional development."

The first order of business at the Atlanta Conference was an executive committee meeting. President Pawley was retiring that year or his term of office was up at the end of the 1955 meeting. He had been in office for four years, actually. He had acted for James Hopson on two occasions and had served his own two years. But in this meeting which was conducted by him, Pawley had several things to say which are believed to have put the members thinking. Some of the things he said

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[18] The Executive Secretary noted that the $800 debt for NADSA Encore had not been paid with the closing date of this report.

were these:

> I would be dishonest if I said that I regret leaving office after nearly four years as acting president and president. To the contrary I anticipate with relief relinquishing the responsibilities of this office to another and returning to the ranks. Not that the experience has been an unrewarding one but it also has its tribulations.[19]

In suggesting new areas for future development Dr. Pawley called attention to the fact that:

> For the past several years I have noted the absence at our meeting of colleges from the Southwest. Old timers will recall that Southern, Dillard, Wiley, Langston, Texas College and Arkansas State were at one time regular participants in this conference. Since 1952, however, only Grambling and Lincoln from the Southwestern region have been in attendance. Since Lincoln is "Southwest" only for convenience in organization that leaves only Grambling as a true representative of the region.
>
> I urge that ways and means of bringing these colleges back into the fold be undertaken. It is my belief that if we follow the plan of alternating our annual meeting among the three regions that the problem would be solved. In the past five years exclusive of this year, we have met in the Southeast twice, at Alabama State and Florida, in the South Central twice, at Kentucky and Tennessee State, and in the "Southwest", in quotation marks, at Lincoln, only once. This year we are meeting again in the Southwest. I recommend strongly that a standing committee on time and place of the Annual Conference be appointed by the incoming executive committee in order to schedule the place of meeting two to three years in advance.[20]

The president did not let up without giving this parting reminder:

> We are still overwhelmingly a theatre organization. We devote nine-tenths of our time to dramatic activity. If I were exclusively a teacher of speech I would see no reason for affiliating with NADSA. Isn't there some way we could devote more conference time to the speech teachers and the non-dramatic speech activities? If NADSA does not find some way to serve the teacher of speech, I predict that sooner or later speech teachers will

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[19] Executive Secretary's Report, The NADSA Conference (Atlanta, Georgia, March 29 - 31, 1955), p. 2.

[20] Ibid., p. 3.

form their own organization.[21]

From the report the conference at Atlanta may not be thought of as a momentous one. But many of the organization's annual activities were carried on. A new feature was a speech clinic demonstration which was thought of an probably the highest point of interest of the conference. The consultants for the conference were from the Intercollegiate Dramatic Association conference, with Dr. Anne Cook from Howard University serving as guest speaker.

Miss Ester Jackson and Mr. Baldwin Burroughs served directly with the conference as co-hosts for their respective colleges, Clark and Spelman. They had both done a superb job of arranging for the play festival, lavish social activities, and excellent housing and some good group sessions.

The play festival activities were divided between Howe Hall at Spelman and Davage Auditorium on Clark's campus.

The festival included Central State in East of Eden; Kentucky State in Sleeping Dogs; Lincoln University in scenes from I've Got Sixpence; Mississippi Vocational College in Andante; and Alabama State in Men Don't Change; Bethune-Cookman College in Rope; Fort Valley in The Storm; Albany State in The Past Catches Up (an original play by A. P. Turner, the director); Florida A. and M. in Shades and Shadows (an original play by Randolph Edmonds, the director); Grambling College in The Well; and Tennessee State in Act I of See How They Run.

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[21] Ibid., p. 3.

Floyd Sandle of Grambling became president of the association and inherited a debt. The executive secretary's financial report during the early spring of 1956 may clear this point. His report reads:

> The financial status: NADSA's outstanding debt at the end of each conference remains the payment for the publication of Encore. The anticipated income of #300.00 which was not collected from host schools of last year leaves us with an Encore debt of $325.00.[22]

The total taken in by the conference at Atlanta was $186.03.

Lois Turner was elected vice-president and invited the conference to Fayetteville State Teachers College, North Carolina, for 1956. There was some reluctance to going that far up in IDA territory (this was the stronghold of the Intercollegiate Dramatic Association) but delegates were reminded that Lois Turner of Fayetteville had attended all conferences wherever they were held and that settled the matter. Fayetteville's invitation was accepted.

The Twentieth Annual Conference at Fayetteville State Teachers College, Fayetteville, North Carolina. The Twentieth Annual Conference of the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts met at Fayetteville, North Carolina, April 11 - 14, 1956. In numbers it was a small conference, but in general interest it was one of the best conferences in the association's history. There were four schools present, Lincoln University, Grambling College, Tennessee Agriculture and Industrial University, and West Charlotte Senior High School.

The host director, Lois Turner, had secured the services of Paul Green as guest speaker for the meeting. Mr. Green spoke to the con-

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[22] Ibid., p. 1.

ference on the subject "Our Democratic Heritage." The report on the conference pointed up the fact that the guest address was the high point of the entire meeting. Some portions of Mr. Green's speech follow:

> Here in the South the challenge of the future is as sharp and relentless as any place on the globe . . . . The majority of our political, educational and even religious leaders are continuing to deny the very democratic heritage which has helped to make them what they are . . .
>
> Passions and prejudices, old shibboleths and custom and folk mores of outmoded provincial practices still plague us. Some have already given way before the impact of science and man's inventions, and others are yeilding one by one. The theory of prideful and unearned racial superiority has been exploded as a myth, not only religiously but scientifically. And those political leaders wherever they be who stay the coming of this age, who would stop the reaching hand of progress . . .they may for a while reap special honors, they may get places of trust and the applause of many of their fellows, yet soon they must give way to the sweep of the age.
>
> Democracy is a philosophy of government fitted to men full grown, fitted to men who acknowledge themselves as morally responsible beings, as well as free, and who accept the duties that go with that responsibility. They accept freedom in terms of freedom . . . . But this democratic heritage of ours has received and is receiving betrayal and abuse at the hands of those who enjoy its favors. . . . . .
>
> So there's plenty of work to do, and you people gathered here are proof that it will be done . . . . But let us be unyeilding in our cause, in our stand for the truth--the truth that declares that all men are created equal--equal in the soul and in the sight of God . . . .
>
> And thus our democratic heritage shall be the more reaffirmed, purged and made clear. And the vision, the hope and the trust which the founding fathers had for this nation shall be justified in us the living--even as we shall be justified and found worthy by our children and their children that come after us.[23]

The theme of the conference was: "Drama and Speech in the Preser-

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[23] The Fayetteville Observer, Fayetteville, North Carolina (April 12, 1956)

vation of Our Democratic Heritage." It was the general feeling that Mr. Green in his address did the subject justice. It was the first time for most delegates to have the opportunity to meet this playwright.

President J. W. Seabrook of Fayetteville State Teachers College proved a genial host-president. To many he seemed one of the few presidents who enjoyed the constant fellowship with members of the association.

The publicity for the conference at this North Carolina college was ably handled by Mr. John Parker of the Fayetteville faculty. In fact the conference coverage was probably the best the conference had enjoyed in a long time. The newspapers were filled daily with the conference proceedings. That was something quite different for NADSA.

The usual sectional meetings were held on Choral Speaking, Speech Training for the Classroom Teacher, and on Speech Correction. The two most interesting sessions were the ones Techniques of Group Discussion, and Playwriting. There was a unique demonstration given on the Techniques of Group Discussion, with Dr. Edgar A. Toppin of the Fayetteville faculty as consultant. Appearing on the discussion demonstration were Joseph Adkins, Fort Valley, chairman and student participants from Clark College, Florida A. and M., Fisk University, Kentucky State, and Fayetteville State.

The playwriting session had as its chairman, Randolph Edmonds of Florida, with Paul Green serving as consultant. It was mentioned that the conference was small in numbers. This fact allowed for everyone to participate quite freely in most of the discussions. This was the

case in the discussion on playwriting. It was more of a session for the entire delegation than just the small number of panelists. Mr. Green proved himself very resourceful for the large number of questions that went to him.

All sessions were better attended at Fayetteville than had been the case for a long time. There were student secretaries reporting at all group sessions. The students had been assigned to the various discussion groups and were in some cases discussion leaders. All sessions were well attended. Students did not loiter around the campus while the teachers discussed the problems. In a number of cases that situation had obtained. Several of the discussions that were planned did not materialize because the participants did not make it to the conference.

The schools that did have representatives at the conference made up the play festival. Central State presented Overruled; Kentucky State presented Smokescreen; Lincoln University presented Purgatory; Grambling College presented The Red Key; and Tennessee State presented Man in The Stalls. Fayetteville State did not do a host production.

Three North Carolina high schools appeared on the program. They were: West Charlotte High School presenting Randolph Edmonds' Gangsters Over Harlem; the Mary P. Hamlin High School presenting The Rock; and the E. E. Smith High School presenting The Gypsy.

The play festival went off smoothly but, as was the case at the Atlanta meeting in 1955, failed to make money for the conference.

Financial Report. The 1956 NADSA conference collections showed:

Total collection (memberships and special)		$401.00
Note: Randolph Edmonds reported $88.00 from the Phillipa Schuyler Concerts		
Disbursements -- Thomas Poag (NADSA Encore)	$30.00	
James Randolph (NADSA Encore)	89.20	
	59.00	$59.00
Net Collected		341.80

The Executive Secretary's financial report showed:

Total cost of NADSA Encore for 1956	$503.51
Balance owed on old Encore bill	325.00
Total Encore bill April 26, 1956	882.51
Estimated amount to be paid on bill after 1956 conference	453.51
To leave a balance due on Encore bill March, 1957	375.00
The treasury balance March 1, 1957 showed	51.25

On noting the financial predicament of the treasurey for the future it was voted and adopted by common consent that "Each member organization or players guild will present a project, play or raise money and earmark $25.00 or more donation from receipts to rid the organization of the Encore indebtedness; that this money be sent to the executive secretary by December 1, 1956."

Dr. Lillian Voorhees, chairman of the Special Projects Committee was unable to attend the Fayetteville conference, but her report showed some strong suggestions. The secretary quoted from the 5th and 6th paragraphs of her report the following:

> . . . The purpose of your chairman in submitting a "report of no report" is to propose that the assembly gathered at the 1956 conference at Fayetteville . . ., constitute itself by formal vote a "Committee of the Whole" with the express purpose of seeing to it that every person attending the convention join NADSA and pay his membership fee before leaving the conference. Sometimes, even the students participating in the festival and directors of long and honored standing in NADSA fail to do this, thereby necessitating the expendure of funds for reminders and embarrassing the Executive Secretary-Treasurer with unpaid bills of sizable proportions.
>
> The motion which I am making "in absentia," Mr. President, and fellow members, in effect makes each person a Committee of one responsible for (1) attending to his own membership and (2) encouraging his neighbor to do so during the period of the conference. Especially does it lay upon each director the responsibility for seeing that all members of his group attending are full-fledged NADSAians in good standing before leaving and that the organization dues for the institutions represented are paid.[24]

The secretary's report shows that in NADSA's president's official report to the conference, President Sandle emphasized his efforts "to tighten up the activities of NADSA at the regional level." He felt that "this is the area in which member schools of NADSA might work harder to perpetuate the aims of our organization; along with emphasizing greater activity among the student delegates"[25]

The Constitution and Recommendations Committee brought in a number of recommendations. One important recommendation was that the constitution be divided into three parts, with three members assigned to study, re-write, re-vise, and the like, any parts so desired by members.

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[24] Report of the Executive Secretary, Annual Conference of NADSA (March, 1957), p. 5.

[25] Ibid., p. 2.

The Time and Place Committee was recommended to function permanently. For the first time in a long time, through the functioning of this committee, it was clear where the 1957 conference would be held before the delegates had to listen to a hassle over possible places.

The conference created anxious moments for the officers of NADSA, but beyond that little confusion, the 1956 conference ended on a happy note.

The social activities had been happily prepared and enjoyed. Randolph Edmonds had served as the critic judge at the play festival and Thomas Pawley had served as the luncheon speaker. He spoke from the subject, "Theatre Arts and The Educated Man."

The Twenty-First Annual Conference at Grambling College, Grambling, Louisiana. The 1957 conference of The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts met at Grambling College. It was probably not too happy a situation for the president of the organization to have the added task of serving as host. It is obvious that much of the time spent in serving as host might well have been spent in conference activities.

The guest speaker for the conference was Dr. Lee Norvelle, director of the theatre and chairman of the department of speech and theatre at the University of Indiana. Dr. Norvelle spoke to the delegates and the Grambling student body on the subject, "The Function of a Theatre in a Democracy." Many are those who have said that his speech was a major challenge and that it got the conference off to a significant start.

The theme for the conference was: "The Function of Speech and Theatre In A Democracy."

The panel discussions dealt with the theme as follows: "The Function of Speech and Theatre in a Democracy: At the Secondary Level; The Function of Speech and Theatre in a Democracy: At the Community Level; and The Function of Speech and Theatre in a Democracy: At the College Level."

In terms of numbers, the conference at Grambling was large. The colleges present were: Albany State College; Alabama State College; Atlanta University; Bethune-Cookman; Central State College; Clark College; Fayetteville State College; Fisk University; Florida Agriculture and Mechanical University; Fort Valley State College; Grambling College; Jackson College; Kentucky State College; LeMoyne College; Lincoln University; Mississippi Vocational College; Morehouse College; Spelman College; and Southern University. In addition to Dr. Lee Norvelle, Mr. John Wray Young, director of the Shreveport Little Theatre and Mr. James Hull Miller, professor of drama and technical director of the Centenary College Theatre were consultants and critics for the play festival. Mr. John Wray Young was also slated to serve as Luncheon speaker, but at the last minute was unable to accept and Mr. Miller was an able substitute.

Because of the financial slump in which the association found itself, the host director admittedly placed his greatest emphasis on the play festival--advertising it throughout the state, with the idea in mind of a good door receipt. But at the first business session the host director's president, Dr. R. W. E. Jones of Grambling College, knowing that his Speech and Drama head and NADSA's president was having his troubles trying to pull his ailing organization out of the hole, came

to the rescue. He doubted that the door receipts would net the organization the $300.00 that Sandle had guaranteed it. So, at this meeting he came in, greeted the organization and its members and handed Mr. Sandle a cashier's check for $350.00. This, he said, was to underwrite the guarantee made by "his director." He asked that the door fee be eliminated and that all Grambling students and faculty be allowed to attend the play festival without fee. The door fee was dropped.

The play festival went on as scheduled. Fisk University presented The Gazing Globe; Fort Valley presented Thirst; and Fayetteville State presented Mood Piece, all on Wednesday night April 3, 1957.

On Thursday night April 4, the Grambling College Theatre Guild presented Frank Carney's three act play, The Righteous Are Bold.

A portion of the conference time had been set aside for honoring Paul Green. This seemingly was a national activity for that year and NADSA felt called upon to do honor to the brilliant playwright. In honoring Mr. Green two of his plays were presented. Florida A. and M. presented Fixin's and Tennessee State presented In Abraham's Bosom. Both plays were presented on Friday afternoon April 5.

On Friday night April 5 the following plays were presented. Kentucky State presented Mood Piece; Mississippi Vocational presented Andante; and Bethune-Cookman College presented A Game of Chess.

Much of the anxiety, tension, and possibly "punch" had been taken out of the officers of NADSA when the "cashier's check" entered the picture. With few exceptions, all that happened after President Jones had made his financial entrance and exit was anti-climatic. But the

conference moved along from event to event.

Lois Turner took over as president at this twenty-first conference. This was the first time a woman had come to the presidency. Lillian Voorhees was elected vice-president in what many called "a long overdue move." She would become president in two years by succession in 1959. Many felt that it had been the steady hand of Lillian Voorhees which had preserved what had often been a "wavering organization."

The executive secretary had called to the attention of the body an important item in the Newsletter which needed discussion. It seems important enough to record here:

> This office would call attention to the failure of the organization members to vote on two recommendations for constitutional amendments following the Atlanta conference. Only three votes were returned by members and a "lack of quorum" nullified the effor t to provide for a standing committee on Time and Place of the annual conference, and to provide for the conference host school to be responsible to NADSA for 75% of the gross receipts of the conference with a guarantee of $300.00". Both of these items appear pertinent in connection with clearer functioning within our group and should deserve stronger consideration.[26]

The first of these items was taken care of--the matter of a standing committee on time and place. The second item was talked about but no conclusion was reached. The matter was to be continued until the next conference at Florida A. and M.

Throphies were given to past presidents and past executive secretaries on the occasion of the Annual Banquet. This little "act" on the part of the host school seemingly caught the "past" officers a bit un-

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[26]Report of the Executive Secretary, Annual Conference of NADSA, (April, 1957), p. 8.

expectedly.

The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts' president, Floyd L. Sandle, turned the $350.00 over to the executive secretary, but not until it had been voted on in Executive Session that the association was not to attempt another journal until there was available cash "on hand" to pay for the Encore. The money, along with 1957 conference membership dues went to pay off all existing debts. The president was happy to leave office with the organization "out of the red."

The 1957 conference adjourned on a fairly peaceful note.

The Twenty-Second Annual Conference at Florida Agriculture and Mechanical University, Tallahassee, Florida. The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts' twenty-second annual conference and play festival met at Florida A. and M. University April 9 - 12, 1958. The theme of the conference was: "High, Wide and Deep." But leading up to conference time, the editor of the Newsletter, Dr. Thomas Pawley, issued his thought-provoking message to all probable delegates and members of the association. The caption was: "What's Wrong With NADSA?" He then proceeded to say:

> Attendance at annual conferences has fallen off tremendously within the last two or three years, having reached an all time low at Fayetteville. Member colleges are no longer eager to participate in the play festival . . . . Our income has fallen to such an extent that publication of Encore had to be suspended until we could get out of the red. Where once we complained that conferences were so full that we could hardly transact routine business now we complain that there is too much free time . . ..
>
> I do not pretend to know the answer. Indeed I do not know whether there is an answer. But I do think the time has come for a serious re-examination and self appraisal. We cannot continue to expect member colleges to break into the busy spring sessions and travel as much as two thousand miles round trip in order to fraternize with each other no matter how pleasant that may be.

> Originally the organization was founded in 1935 to aid in the development of educational theatre and the speech arts in southern Negro colleges. It was to be a means of impressing on college administrators the values of our profession. It was also a means of popularizing, so to speak, the speech and dramatic arts among our students. Perhaps now that twenty-two years later most of these original objectives have been achieved, we need to reset or at least re-think our aims and modify our program.
>
> SAA, AETA, the Southeastern Theatre Conference and similar organizations are furnishing more and more to faculty members the professional stimulation which the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts once provided. Consequently NADSA remains unique only to the extent of a larger student than faculty membership and the fact that both a conference and play festival are being attempted simultaneously. Should we continue to do so? Is not one or the other suffering because of this dual purpose? Could we not attempt a conference one year and a festival the next as an alternative?[27]

Many had read and given some serious thought to Dr. Pawley's idea, because there was some general discussion about his thesis that came out. Nevertheless, the conference and play festival got underway as scheduled.

The opening meeting got underway Wednesday, April 9, with greetings being offered from the following Theatre Organizations: ANTA, Dick Campbell; AETA, William P. Halstead, University of Michigan; SETC, Randolph Edmonds, Florida; SAA, Clarence Edney, Florida State University; CTC, Frances Bowen, The John Hopkins University; IDA, Felicia Anderson, Virginia State College; Honor Societies, James Brock, Florida State University.

Dr. William P. Halstead, Mr. Dick Campbell, Mrs. Frances Bowen, and Dr. James Brock served as consultants and critic judges for the discussion sessions and the play festival.

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[27] NADSA Newsletter (March, 1958), p. 2.

The new and well-appointed Charles Winter Wood Theatre was the setting for the conference.

The FAMU Creative Children's Theatre opened the play festival with their presentation of James Norris' Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp, under the direction of Irene C. Edmonds. This presentation offered much in the way of inspiration to colleges who were attempting Children's Theatre.

In addition to the address given by Dr. Halstead, Mrs. Bowen addressed the delegates on the subject, "High, Wide and Deep in Children's Theatre," and a panel of parents of the children of the FAMU Children's Theatre discussed "The Problems of Organizing and Maintaining a Children's Theatre," and "The Responsibility of the Parent to Children's Theatre." There was also a panel discussion which followed the other two on "The Responsibility of the Members of Children's Theatre."

Mr. Dick Campbell of ANTA addressed the delegates on the subject, "Shedding Some Light on the Dark Continent." Mr. Campbell was serving as Field Consultant of the International Cultural Exchange Program of the American National Theatre Academy. His interest was that of finding suitable Negro College groups to tour Africa with plays.

Appearing in the play festival were The Tennessee State Players in The No' Count Boy; Grambling College in Scene IV of St. Joan; the Prairie View College Players in Poor Old Jim; The Fort Valley State Players in Patterns; Johnson C. Smith in A Pair of Lunatics; The Albany State College Players in Stolen Identity; The Bethune-Cookman Players in The Game of

Chess; and Florida A. and M. presented The Man Who Died at Twelve O'Clock.

Two high schools were scheduled, The Booker T. Washington High of Miami and the Booker T. Washington High of Rocky Mount, North Carolina. However, only the Booker T. Washington of Miami appeared.

Sectional meetings were held on Public Discussion and Debate; Opportunities in Speech Correction; and a debate was held on the subject: Resolved: That Requirement of Membership in a Labor Organization as a Condition of Employment Should Be Illegal.

Discussions especially pertaining to The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts such as What is NADSA's Spread or Reach? What Should NADSA's Program include on the Children's Theatre; High School; College; and Graduate Level?

The Executive Committee agreed finally to drop the practice of holding a host school to a $300.00 guarantee when it invited the fonference.

It was noted, however, that the host director, Randolph Edmonds, paid the $300.00 guarantee for the year 1958 in as much as the matter of the guarantee had not been clarified until the conference was in session at Florida.

Mrs. Winona Fletcher of Kentucky State College became the new executive secretary at the Florida meeting, succeeding Willis N. Pitts.

The social activities were lavish as usual at Florida. The standard feature of a "dinner" at the president's home was as lavish as in previous years. Other social events included well planned activities for the student delegates as well as the directors.

The conference was invited to Lincoln University for the 1959 meeting.

CHAPTER V

ENCORE: SADSA'S JOURNAL

The journal had its inception under the presidential regime of Thomas E. Poag of Tennessee Agriculture and Industrial State College, but it was Lillian Voorhees of Fisk University who steered the association to the publication of the first issue. As chairman of the Committee on Publication--the committee which brought in the recommendations for the journal--she had the task of getting approval through and with the committee for SADSA's first Encore.

The recommendations of that committee are as follows:

1. That an annual journal be puclished each year after the annual conference.

2. That the purposes of the journal should be: (a) to furnish publicity outlets for the organization, and (b) to encourage and preserve creative efforts in the field of the drama.

3. That in line with these purposes, the program review and planning news be allocated to the periodic bulletins reserving the annual for such items as: (a) a playwriter's box, (b) a director's forum, (c) a student panel, (d) backstage anecdotes, (e) onstage items and comment, (f) field notes, (g) who's who, and (h) a book shelf.

4. That the project be underwritten by the organization with the suggestion from Mr. Edmonds that the aid of a foundation or educational fund be sought to finance it.

5. That each paid member of the SADSA receive one copy. That others be sold according to size within the range of one to five dollars.

6. That the format be a paper covered journal about the size and thickness of Life magazine with art cover design and illustrations. No advertisements to be included except those useful to persons working in Speech and Drama. Other details left to the Editing Board.

7. Management to be in the hands of a Board of Editors, with chairman and three directors and three students (one each from each of the three regions).

The record[1] shows no name was suggested for the journal. The recommendations brought in by the committee were received and adopted.

This then was the initial step in getting the journal started.

It is noted that, following in line with the recommendations of the Committee on Publications, the first issue of the journal had the following make up: Short articles covering the first 37 pages; a Director's forum covering the next 7 pages; a Student Panel covering 4 additional pages; and a Book Shelf covering the 5 final pages. Listed among the contributors of articles in this issue are Langston Hughes, Lillian Voorhees, Thomas Poag; Thomas Pawley, Helen Spaulding, Florence May, Ethlynne Thomas, and S. Randolph Edmonds.

The issue featured two original plays, one by Robert Hayden, The History of Punchinello, the other by Saunders Walker, Roots in The South, a play of Negro life. It also featured the speech of Mr. Dick Campbell, which was delivered at the 1946 SADSA Conference that met at Tennessee State, Nashville, Tennessee.

This 1948 Encore, the first in the Association's history, was the result of the persistence of Lillian Voorhees and others who shared her enthusiasm. She and they kept saying, "We cannot stop with a News Bulletin; we must have a journal . . . an effective means of communica-

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[1]Report of The Eleventh Annual Conference of the SADSA (April-May, 1947), p. 4.

tion from us and to and among us."[2] Under the Director's Forum there are descriptions of "Dramatics at Southern University," by Vivian J. Tellis; The "Fort Valley College Players Guild," by Joseph Adkins, "New Equipment and Resources at Paine," by Sue Craig; and "The Dramatics Workshop at Grambling," by Floyd Sandle.

The Student Panel section carries descriptions of "LeMoyne Highlights," by Edwin Robinson, "Ingenuity at Work," by Mame Currie, "Central Staging at Fisk," by Gabe Wright; "Grambling College Players Guild," by A. C. Odell; and "Student and Community Drama Activities at Paine," by Sue Craig.

The featured articles were: "Towards Community Drama," by S. Randolph Edmonds, "Common Goals," by Ethlynne H. Thomas; "Speech Education in Negro Colleges," by Florence May; "Sepia Scope in Drama," by Helen Spaulding; "Stagecraft in Negro Colleges," by Thomas Pawley; "The Negro in the Drama from the Greeks to the Present," by Thomas E. Poag; "SADSA, Yesterday and Tomorrow," by Lillian Voorhees; and the speech by Mr. Dick Campbell, "There is Confusion."

Other activities described under the Director's Forum are: "A New Method," by Gladys I. Forde; "Problems of the Children's Theatre," by Millicent Dobbs Jordon; "Choric Drama," by A. Dunn Jones; "The Laboratory Theatre," by Lois Belton; and "Organizing a Theatre Project," by Thomas E. Poag.

A short statement from Ethlynne Thomas, then president of the

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[2] News Bulletin of SADSA (1947), p. 1.

Intercollegiate Drama Association, regarding IDA's attitude toward the journal seems significant to this first issue. It follows:

> The Intercollegiate Drama Association joins me in congratulations to the officers and staff of SADSA on the occasion of the issurance of its first journal. We of the sister organization, IDA, salute you in this venture. It has been pleasant in the past to receive your literature and bulletins. Now your determination to edit an official organ receives deserved high applause, stemming from our pride in your finding utterance in a mode of expression which we seek, but have not yet achieved.[3]

From the secretary's report one finds the following note regarding the editor's distribution of the journal:

> Copies of the SADSA Encore were delivered to all paid members at the conference and were on sale for one dollar. As a first issue, the magazine gives promise of what such an organ may become. The editor is deeply grateful for the fine cooperation which came from many busy persons, some of whom responded promptly even when ill in bed. In the light of this first experience, these suggestions are offered.
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> 1. That all material be solicited early and in the hands of the editor by January first. Difficulty with deadlines is sure to be encountered if the collecting of material goes beyond this point.
>
> 2. If original plays are to be a part of the content, and a playwriting contest is to be held in this connection, the contest should close by the first of the calendar year. It is recommended that the American National Theatre and Academy or some other such neutral and competent organization serve as judge. Also, it would be desirable that plays submitted be those which have been tried out in production.
>
> 3. Though some very good pictures were received for the magazine, many were not clear enough or well enough focused to use and the representation in pictures throughout the organization was not as wide as the editors would have liked. It is suggested that during the coming year,

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[3]Ethlynne H. Thomas, "Common Goals," SADSA Encore (Nashville, Tennessee, McQuiddy Company, 1948), p. 25.

directors make a business of getting good photographic records of their performances, standard size 8"x10" glossy finish. With the offset process as many good pictures as are desired can be reproduced in the magazine without additional cost.

4. It is suggested that the annual be definitely budgeted and that the cooperation of all interested groups be sought, including the IDA, for staff, material, contacts, resources, and support. Members of the SADSA should know that without the generous guarantee of $300 from Florida A. and M. College for support of the publication, it would not have been possible to undertake it.[4]

Despite her good work in getting the journal started, Lillian Voorhees served only one term as editor. It was her request not to serve longer. The following is an account of her request to be released from that duty:

> Dr. Voorhees asked to be released from the Editorship of SADSA Encore for 1948-1949 in view of her duties as executive secretary and the desirability of rotating such responsibilities and privileges. Dr. Hopson of Talladega was appointed to this post with the promise of assistance and support from the former editor.[5]

James O. Hopson - Second Encore Editor. The continuous existance and growth of the Journal has meant the giving of services by several people who have served as it's editor. Within the scope of eleven years--the period during which the association has had an up-hill and sometimes a down-hill struggle with its publication--three editors

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[4] Report of the Twelfth Annual Conference of SADSA (April, 1948), pp. 1 - 2.

[5] Ibid., p. 6.

have served. James O. Hopson, the second editor, served creditably.

The make up of the second issue of the journal was somewhat different from the first issue. Hopson was fortunate enough to have included in the issue four original plays. They were: The Gold Piece, by Langston Hughes; Soul Gone Home, by Langston Hughes; Balloons in Her Hair, by Frank G. Saunders; and The Pit, by Jeanne Belcher Black.

The articles appearing in this issue were: "Hitting Below Par," by Helen Spaulding; "The Rise of Negro Professional Theatres from 1897-1943," by Thomas Poag; "Voluntary Learning Through Speech and Dramatics," by Joseph Adkins; "An Experiment in Creative Dramatics," by Irene C. Edmonds; and "I Am a Fugitive From a Play," by Thomas Pawley.

A guest article by Robert Schnitzer, which came at the request of Editor Hopson, and earring the title "ANTA to SADSA" seems to be of such nature as to warrant reproduction, in part, here. It follows:

> It is a year now since I breathed the stimulating atmosphere of my first SADSA Conference, but my memories are still clear and my voice still loud as I tell every theatre worker I meet about it. You want to know what American National Theatre and Academy has been doing since I discussed it at Tallahassee, so I will try to set down a few of the lines along which progress has been made.
>
> Regional Theatre. Turning away from the New York and the international scenes, I come to ANTA's activities that most closely affect--or can affect--the members of SADSA. After all, we are always most interested in "what does it offer me?" or "what can I do to help?" Here I hope that, as an adopted member, I will be forgiven a little scolding. My facts may be wrong (I hope they are), but I can learn of only two SADSA members who communicated in any way with ANTA during the past year. Dr. Edmonds dropped in for a pleasant visit and Abe Hill invited me to see rehearsals of his production of The Power of Darkness. Perhaps we were not able to fully solve the problems they brought with them, but we tried--and we got to know each other better all around.
>
> ANTA cannot help you, if you don't get in touch. ANTA's

philosophy is not to attempt to sew theatre seeds in barren ground, but to help to the fullest extend possible the sprout which, having gotten a start of its own, can be cultivated to fruition. In this way there is no chance of superimposing unwanted theatre activity from a central agency; each theatre worker can be aided in working out his own plan to fit his own community's needs.

. . . . And as I said at Tallahassee, there is no way to explain what ANTA may mean to the Negro theatre except to tell what it means to the American theatre as a whole . . .

The Negro theatre is one more facet of the drama throughout this nation.

ANTA is there to serve its members as it is there to serve the Scandinavian-influenced theatre in Minnesota, the church drama group of an Iowa town, Dallas Theatre '49 of Margo Jones, or the multitudinous off-Broadway groups right here in New York.

What is ANTA to SADSA? What do you want it to be? Get in and make it so, by your participation, by your demands upon its services, by your contributions to its strength.[6]

The section of the Journal called Around The Circuit combined what the first issue carried under the headings of the Director's Forum and Student Panel. In the Around the Circuit carried highlights from Little Theatre activities at Fort Valley, Lincoln University, Jackson College, Bethune-Cookman College, Florida A. and M., Tennessee, Fisk University, and Talladega College.

Editor, James O. Hopson, said editorially in the second issue of the journal:

This number marks the second appearance of SADSA Encore.

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[6]Robert C. Schnitzer, "ANTA to SADSA," SADSA Encore (Nashville, Tennessee: McQuiddy Company, 1949), p. 15.

> Through the excellent editorship of Dr. Lillian Voorhees the first issue was well received. Nationally recognized groups and schools sent in favorable opinions. Already well known school libraries have sent in their subscriptions for the second issue. The pervasive note that runs through the comments on the first issue is that there is need for such a journal. With the appearance of the current number of SADSA Encore we hope the foundation is laid for a publication that will become in future years one of the best of its kind. Your present editor, however, discovered that such a project can involve many "headaches" that he hopes will disappear as long range planning for the journal develops. This means the full support of all SADSA members in bringing to the magazine the literary standards to which it is entitled and the financial support that it must have.[7]

At the Fourteenth annual conference of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts Editor Hopson, reporting to the conference, gave an account of continued progress in the development of the journal. He felt that the journal was a publication of "real merit." One finds Hopson emphasizing the many comments that "have been received from organizations and individuals of national scope indicate that there is a definite need and place for a journal of this type." Hopson mentioned at this time that "With the publication this year of the third issue we are beginning to move from the experimental stage into that stage where long range planning is necessary."[8] The editor said that as editor of the journal for two years "I know something of the headaches and problems involved." And on the basis of his experiences and maybe headaches, too, Encore's editor made the following

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[7] Ibid., p. 5.

[8] Report of the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the SADSA (April 26 - 28, 1950), p. 6.

recommendations:[9]

1. That a functioning editorial board be set up to determine the overall policy of the journal.

2. That the board authorize the editor to go ahead with publication plans at a date early enough so that the printer and contributors will have proper time to do their jobs.

3. That an intensive subscription campaign be launched so that the publication can pay for itself and so that the journal may have the widespread distribution that it should.

4. That the association members go on record as supporting the editor in supplying material such as articles, pictures, and the like, to produce a journal that will represent a real cross-section of association activities.

A by-law to the constitution carried this stipulation regarding the journal:

> SADSA shall publish annually a magazine, SADSA Encore, to be ready for distribution each year at the annual conference and play festival. This magazine shall follow in general the editorial policies followed in the first issues (1948, 1949, 1950).[10]

Another by-law took this form:

> The deadline for material for SADSA Encore shall be February 15 of each year.

It was further discussed and agreed upon, that the magazine should contain editorials, articles, plays, and photographs of the productions by SADSA members and such sections as the following: (a) Book Shelf, (b) Student Forum, (c) Director's Panel, (d) News Notes of outstanding contributions, significant events or activities of affiliated organi-

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[9] Ibid., pp. 6 - 7.

[10] Ibid., p. 9.

zations, and (e) Advertisements related to the fields of Speech and Dramatic Art.

It was discussed and agreed, that the editor was to be appointed each year by the Executive Committee and that the editor should in turn appoint an editorial staff in consultation with the Executive Committee consisting of an advertising and circulation manager, an associate editor, and editors for each of the regular sections designated, and any additional members he might choose to designate.

It seemingly was the consensus of opinion in the group and it was agreed upon at the suggestion of the editor that the SADSA Encore would continue as a combination scholarly journal and professional news journal. Other materials suggested as adequate for the journal were abstracts of theses, backstage anecdotes, and possibly some reports.

At this Fourteenth Annual Conference the executive committee appointed James O. Hopson to succeed himself as editor and gave him authority to go ahead at once with the magazine for the next year. Also, this committee thought it best to separate the functions of Circulation Manager and Advertising Manager. But no action was taken on these offices.

In the Editor's report at the Fifteenth Annual Conference at Alabama State College, in Montgomery, Alabama, he said he felt "The ground work on the magazine had been laid now and that it continued to be recognized as a magazine of first quality."[11] He indicated that the

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[11] Report of the Fifteenth Annual Conference of the SADSA (May 2 - 5, 1951), p. 10.

circulation was womewhat better than in previous years. However, he indicated that the problem persisted of responses to requests for material, meeting deadlines, and holding to promises for articles.

The 1951 issue of The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts Encore carried the following articles: "At the Turn of The Century," by Lillian Voorhees; "Better Human Relations through the Medium of Dramatic Art," by Thomas E. Poag; "Opportunities for the Negro in Hollywood," by Carlton Moss; "Aid Values in Choral Speaking for Dramatic Art," by Lillian Voorhees; and "The Status of Speech Education in Negro Colleges," by A. Florence May.

Two original playw were carried in this issue. They were Outcast, by Dorothy Lorene Dennis and The Tam, by Vilma Howard. In addition to the articles and the plays, there is in this issue the Book Shelf section and Around the Circuit. This section carries news of Speech and Theatre activities at Alabama State College, Alabama A. and M. College, Arkansas A. M. and N. College, Butler College, Fayetteville State Teachers College; Fisk University, Florida A. and M. College, Fort Valley State College, Grambling College, Kentucky State College, Lane College, Lincoln University, Southern University, Talladega College, Tennessee State, Tillotson and Wilberforce State College.

Thomas E. Poag-Third Encore Editor. The same year that Thomas Poag stepped down as president of the association he became editor of the SADSA Encore. That was the year 1951. It is to be remembered also that in that same year and at that same conference the association's name was changed from the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts

to the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. Thus, it will be seen that the first issue under Thomas Poag became the NADSA Encore.

In his first report to the conference in 1952 he made the following brief comments to the Executive Committee:

> Dr. Poag reported progress on NADSA Encore and called attention to the plan for editorial responsibilities set up in the fall bulletin. He recommended the listing of schools and colleges at $2.00 each; the NADSA Encore in addition to large space advertising.[12]

And at another time at this same conference one notes a statement regarding the editor:

> The Editor of NADSA Encore, Dr. Poag, called attention to the plan for editorship as outlined in the fall bulletin, 1951, to the content of the current issue, especially the inclusion of articles and photographs by contributors from white colleges. He reported $224 worth of advertising space and listing space sold. He indicated that a new cover design was being worked upon and some changes in format, and that the addition on some abstracts of theses was being contemplated.[13]

One is inclined to feel that Thomas Poag sustained the quality of the Journal. However he, experienced the most difficult editorial term of all. This difficulty was brought on for several reasons. He had the task of securing materials that would keep the annual strong and the association's budget was often strained to keep the Journal going. But Tom Poag was a persistently good editor otherwise the Journal would have

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[12] Report of the Sixteenth Annual Conference of The NADSA (April 1 - 4, 1952), p. 7.

[13] Ibid., p. 9.

ceased to exist, beginning with the 1952 issue. Very little money was realized for the conference at the 1951 meeting at Alabama State.

Nevertheless a 1952 Journal came out. Among the featured articles appearing in this issue were: Abstracts from Research Projects in Speech and Drama at Tennessee Agriculture and Industrial State University, by William D. Cox, Jr., Singer Buchanan, Eddie Ray Williams, and Madelyn E. Brewer; "The Negro Playwright and The South," by Randolph Edmonds; "On To Broadway," by James O. Hopson; "An Approach to Characterization," by Dillingham McDaniel; "Play Directing Takes The Spotlight," by Madelyn E. Brewer; and three guest articles, "Speech Education--Point of View," by Burton H. Byers of Peabody; "Let Me See Your Wares," by Frances Cary Bowen of John Hopkins Children's Theatre; and "Uncle Tom and Uncle Sam: New Light From an Old Play," by Bernard Hewitt of the University of Illinois.

The make up of the Journal included in addition to the articles, the Book Shelf section, News and Notes, and an Editorial, "SADSA becomes NADSA." There was a small total of 35 photographs in this issue. These photographs were of productions of Little Theatre activities in the colleges with membership in the NADSA. Several photographs of Children's Theatre activities are included.

Under News and Notes information is found regarding activities at Fisk University, Fayetteville State Teachers College, Tennessee A. and I., Florida A. and M., Lincoln University, and Fort Valley State.

At the 1952 Conference, the Executive Committee re-elected Dr. Poag to succeed himself as Editor of the Encore.

The financial problems for the Editor and NADSA Encore began to bloom fully with the 1951 and 1952 conferences. There was a bill for the 300 copies at the 1951 meet and one for the same amount of copies at the 1952 meet. For instance, one notes that from an expected income of $829.41 at the 1952 Lincoln University Conference $841.50 was owed to McQuiddy Company for the 1951 and 1952 Journal. Actually in the secretary's report[14] for 1952 one notes that under Expenditures Since Conference that on April 30 McQuiddy Printing Company was paid $300; on June 4 McQuiddy was paid $200; on July 5 McQuiddy was paid another $100. Also in that same report it was noted under Remaining Obligations that NADSA owed McQuiddy $241.51 for Encores.

Despite the financial cloud hanging over his The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts' Encore Editor, Thomas Poag, went full speed ahead with the 1953 issue. But the seriousness of the situation is seen in the Executive Secretary's comment about the Encore and the finances. He says:

> A glimpse at the above financial statement will indicate that our greatest financial problem is the yearly publication of our NADSA Encore. For our organization's financial "potential", the Encore is an expensive item. Only the close cooperation of all NADSA members in selling and buying the Encore will assure that our organization will be able to keep it "out of the red" financially. If you have not paid for "Ads", or if you have not paid or can sell more of the 1953 Encores in your

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[14] Ibid., pp. 19 - 20.

school community, let us hear from you![15]

Under Expenditures for the 1953 conference there is noted two payments by check to McQuiddy Publishing Company as payments on the Encore. One check is for $550 the other one for $85.00. And under Remaining Obligations NADSA is seen to owe McQuiddy on the Encore bill and additional $200.00. It seems obvious that this situation prompted the executive secretary, Willis N. Pitts to make the above statement regarding the Encore and finances.

The 1954 conference of The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts found itself sticking by its valiant Editor, Thomas E. Poag. It was clear that it was not the Editor's fault that NADSA was finding itself more and more unable to finance the Journal. He was, it was felt, doing his job admirably. In many respects, the feeling seemed to be widespread that in quality the Journal itself was getting better. But the struggle was to keep it alive.

It seems that some members of the organization felt that with "new blood" in official positions some new means would be found to raise revenue to finance the publication. Thomas Pawley had been moved into the office of president; Floyd Sandle had become vice-president; Willis N. Pitts had become executive secretary; James Randolph had become business manager for the Encore and the Association still had Thomas

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[15] Report of the Seventeenth Annual NADSA Conference (March 29 - 31, 1953), p. 13.

Poag as Editor of Encore with all of the "founding fathers" still on hand to give encouragement and caution to all efforts. But it seems that "new blood" failed as the answer. At any rate it seemed not to be the answer in 1954.

President Pawley made the following statement in his report to the 1954 conference at Tennessee State, Nashville, Tennessee:

> Stronger financial support and larger membership go hand in hand. We are weak financially and we must do something about it. Rarely in the last five years have we come out in the black and then the balance was not munificent. Most of our income goes into the publication of Encore a most worthy enterprise which ought to be continued. But ways and means of making the publication self sufficient must be devised . . . .[16]

It is noted that Encore Business Manager, James Randolph, made the following suggestions in his 1954 report to the conference:

> That the Encore be given a budget on which to operate; that it is not to exceed this budget, and that the Encore should become self supporting if possible.
>
> That this office is given a clarification as to whether it is to handle all monies for ads and subscriptions for the Encore before submission to the Executive Secretary or if monies are to be sent to the Executive Secretary.
>
> That the Business Manager, Executive Secretary, Circulation Manager of NADSA and Editor of NADSA Encore work closely concerning the budget of NADSA Encore.
>
> That the monies received from subscriptions, advertisements and general sales beyond the set budget be deposited in a bank as NADSA Publication Fund that it may be used for NADSA Encore publication or any of NADSA's publications, i.e. stationery, bulletins, stamps, and the like.

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[16] Report of the Eighteenth Annual Conference of NADSA (April 28 - 30, 1954), p. 9.

> That a deadline be set--and be firm in doing it--for all invoices concerning subscriptions, ads, to be paid. And that the signer of the invoice be held responsible for seeing that the bill is paid.[17]

Dr. Poag, the Editor of NADSA Encore, made a report at this 1954 Conference which assures one that it took a great deal to dim his enthusiasm, despite the Association's financial condition. The following is a part of his report:

> I am very happy to submit the 1954 report for NADSA Encore. It was agreed by the Executive Committee of NADSA on December 29, 1953 at a meeting in New York City to limit the number of copies for NADSA Encore to 300. It was also suggested that other means be found to cut the cost of printing NADSA Encore. The Editor spent many hours with printers trying to secure cheaper rates for the Encore. Our present printer explained that we could save money by using a different grade of paper. With the cooperation of Mr. William D. Cox, the Art editor for NADSA Encore, we selected the paper which is now in our 1954 edition. This paper has greatly aided in making our pictures stand out. We also limited the number of pictures this year for each school.
>
> Efforts to have money on (hand) at the printing of the journal were unsuccessful because of the lateness in securing articles for publications. The cost of the journal is $795 plus 2% sales tax. There were overtime rates of more than $15.00.
>
> I am delighted over the cooperation given to this office (Editor's office) by Mr. James Randolph, our Business Manager. We only lost one "ad" between Nashville and Tallahassee. This in business is considered a good rating average.[18]

The Editor then made the following recommendations:

> That a committee will be formed to study the selling of NADSA Encore.

Despite the difficult financial situation the association found itself in, the 1954 issue of the Journal carried some very high class

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[17] Ibid., pp. 11 - 12.

[18] Ibid., p. 20.

articles. There were three guest articles of very high merit. They were: "Assessment of Vocal Quality by Spectrographic Analysis," by William H. Perkins of The University of Southern California; "A Gripe to the Technical Staff," by William P. Halstead of the University of Michigan; and "The General Humanities Course and Oral Interpretation," by Madge B. Hibler of Morgan State College.

Outstanding articles submitted by NADSA members were: "Four 19th Century European Playwrights," by Randolph Edmonds; "Plot-Discovery-Complication-Denouncement," by Madelyn B. Houston; "The Negro Theatre and Adult Education," by Thomas E. Poag; "A Philosophy for Children's Theatre," by Irene C. Edmonds; "Speaking The Speech," by Lillian Voorhees; and "The Speech and Drama Forum," by Florence May.

Also there is the Student Forum and Notes From Here and There on NADSA; and the Book Shelf.

Following the 1954 conference at Tennessee State and preceeding the 1955 conference at Atlanta, one finds that, with the NADSA Encore as the chief problem, the financial roof almost caved in on the Association. For instance these expenditures for the Journal:

April 14 - McQuiddy Company ----------	(On Encore Bill	$200.00
May 27 " "	" " "	100.00
March 31 - Business Manager (Encore Bill)		7.30
April 14 - " " " "		25.00

It was noted that under Liabilities that The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts had a due bill to McQuiddy Printing Company

of $376.30 going into the 1955 conference. But with the carefully laid plans for a guarantee of $300 from the host schools--Atlanta University, Clark College, and Spelman College, with Morehouse College chipping in, it was thought NADSA might pull out of the "red". The Association's president, Thomas Pawley; the Encore Editor, Thomas Poag, and the Field Representative Randolph Edmonds had all made it clear to the hosts what their obligations were. Also, it seems quite likely that the Executive Secretary, Willis N. Pitts, must have explained the money side of the conference in terms of a guarantee based on expected receipts from the Play Festival. The vice-president, Floyd L. Sandle, had the duty of directing the organization of a program for the conference, along with the hosts. This he did without laboring over the financial side. But it is found that he too called attention to the matter of monies that should accrue from the door receipts of the play festival.

The general feeling before the Atlanta Conference was, that The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts' Encore problems would be ended with the proceeds from this meeting and play festival.

Encore Editor, Thomas Poag, followed directions and had cut down on the Journal. Instead of the 54 odd pages which the 1954 issue carried there were only 41 pages. There were fewer articles and fewer photographs. But there was a Journal.

The articles carried in this issue were: "The Negro Inherits Radio," by Leonard C. Archer; "That Little Bit Extra," by Madelyn Brewer Houston;

"Appreciative Listening," by Ralph G. Nichols; "Our First Year in Community Theatre," by Jim and Gloria Randolph; "Developing Appreciation for the NOH Drama, by Floyd L. Sandle (a reprint from the Southern Speech Journal); and "Portrait of a Pioneer," by Arthur Clifton Lamb.

The issue carried 18 photographs of Little Theatre activities, including Children's Theatre activities.

From the opening Executive Committee meeting NADSA's President, Thomas Pawley, seemingly sensed a poor financial climate at Atlanta. He knew the state of NADSA's finances and he said to the committee:

> Encore is an excellent and worthy project. It is a significant contribution in the field of educational theatre and under the aegis of our former president (Thomas Poag) it has made remarkable progress. But it is my belief that until such time as we have sufficient means to meet its cost that a publication of such magnitude should not be continued. I propose rather that we publish an inexpensive news letter twice annually, modeled after either the Southeastern Theatre Conference Newsletter or the Southern California Theatre Conference Newsletter. The elimination of costs and expensive cover and format and the increased emphasis on scholarly and creative writing and news will I believe serve our desire to be in pring. Then two or three years hence, when and if we have ample cash reserves, we can resume the publication of Encore.[19]

A number of The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts' membefs and officers had felt at least privately that the Journal should be put aside temporarily, but President Pawley said it for the first time openly: ". . . . That a publication of such magnitude should not be continued."

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[19]Report of the President of NADSA to The Nineteenth Annual Conference (March 30, 1955), p. 1.

As things turned out, Thomas Pawley's position about the Journal was but a prelude to what was about to happen. The host schools at the Atlanta Conference failed completely to come through with the $300 guarantee. The Association was left not only with the liability to the McQuiddy Publishers of $376.39, a debt from the 1954 conference, but with the bill for the 300 copies for the 1955 conference. The only monies available to work off some of the debt were those from memberships, organizational and individual.

The Executive Committee probably saw no virtue in changing editors at a time like this. So Thomas Poag was elected to succeed himself another term. Floyd Sandle succeeded to the presidency of the organization, and immediately found himself in the middle of financial woes. It seems that his first thought was to follow through on former president Thomas Pawley's recommendation. But he realized that in spite of the financial burden of the Encore it was something the organization wanted to hold on to if possible. This feeling was reached, seemingly, when the matter of the Encore and its being a financial burden to the association had come up repeatedly and still the association went along with it.

The 1956 conference was going to Fayetteville State Teachers College in North Carolina. It seems that NADSA's President, Floyd Sandle, as well as others of the Association knew that the organization was headed for another issue of the Journal with very little money in sight. The president wrote the editor a letter concerning the matter. It follows in part:

Dr. Poag, do you think we will be able to or that we

should try to force our way through a standard size journal for this year? I have been thinking about this quite seriously, as I am sure you have, too . . . . I have wondered if it will be at all wise to "force" an issue of Encore in the light of our financial situation and go deeper in the red. What do you think?

It is my feeling that we ought not burden ourselves unduly. Let's have an Encore by all means. But let's cut it to a third its original size. . . .

I trust you will give this suggestion careful consideration to look and work with our situation objectively. I feel we can overcome, in part, the financial situation in which we find ourselves. I can hardly feel the members will feel cheated with an Encore reduced in size when they, too, know about our financial status.

Write to me about your position regarding the things I have said . . . . I am anxious to know how we are going to obligate ourselves in this matter before you make any commitments to a publisher.

The president at the same time sent a copy of the letter to all members for their consideration. He included a sheet for each member to fill in and send to Thomas Poag, the Editor, with the following information:

Dear Dr. Poag:

I have read the letter which the president of NADSA wrote to you. My reaction to it is checked below.

_____ Cut the 1956 NADSA Encore to a third its original size.

_____ Cut the 1956 NADSA Encore to half its original size.

_____ Do not cut the 1956 NADSA Encore.

Comment:

_____ _____

Date Signature

At the 1956 meeting the Editor of the Encore alluded to the fact

that he had heard from some members concerning the publication of the Journal. His report in part follows:

> A number of members . . . sent in comments concerning the future of NADSA Encore. This was done at the request of our president. All comments were for the continuation of NADSA Encore, but to reduce the number of pictures and the size of the Journal. The number of pictures were reduced in the 1956 issue. We must have better pictures for our Journal. I am highly re mmending that we continue our publication and to find ways and me of selling it before we leave this conference.[20]

The Editor of Encore had cut down on the 1956 issue. It contained 39 pages, including 4 full page ads and 7 half page ads.

There was one guest article, "To Build A Theatre," by James Hull Miller. The other articles were: "The First Negro Characters In American Drama," by Thomas E. Poag; "Negro Pioneers in the American Theatre," by Eddie Ray Williams; "An Arena Production of Tennessee Williams' Street Car Named Desire," by John Ross; "The Actor Thinks Through His Problem," by Singer Buchanan; "Some Acoustic Differences Between Inefficiently Produced Voice," Granville M. Sawyer; and "Administering the High School Drama Program," by Floyd L. Sandle.

The other section of the issue was the Book Shelf.

The Executive Secretary had the following comment in his report of the 1956 conference:

> The key to our financial status is found in our continuous

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[20] Report of the Twentieth Annual Convention of NADSA (April 11 - 14, 1956), p. 3.

struggle to publish our NADSA Encore without funds to pay for it.

> Last year (1955-1956) our Business Manager made a determined effort to get our schools to rally to our aid with advertisements in Encore and with payments on advertisements contracted for. Some success was gained with the campaign, but not enough to clear our Encore indebtedness at that time. This=past year saw a weaker effort made in the way of collections with another Encore publication adding to the deficit.
>
> . . . . The Encore continues as the chief sore spot in our organization's finances, preventing, as it does so, our NADSA payments for committee needs and other organizational obligations.
>
> Our chief need in the above matter would seem to be a stronger sense of responsibility for our own NADSA commitments and a more definite effort to erase our Encore deficit.[21]

One may be sure there was cause for alarm. For the cost for the NADSA Encore for 1956 was $503.51. There was a balance of $325.00 on the old Encore (1955) bill. After paying $453.51 cents following the 1956 conference, NADSA had an outstanding balance (March 1957) of $375.00 owed to McQuiddy Publishing Company on the Encore.

In the face of the Association's money woes the situation finally had to be brought under control. President Sandle, in cooperation with the Editor of the Encore, and other members of the Executive Committee were forced to close ranks for the future of the organization. This situation was especially forced since Fayetteville failed to rally with the expected $300 guarantee as expected. With the lack of funds from Fayetteville, plus the $375.-- indebtedness already owed to the publishers of the Encore, a new approach to the financial situation had to

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[21] Ibid., p. 7.

be made. It was agreed that there would not be an issue of the Encore until after the 1957 conference.

The 1957 conference was held at Grambling College, The members of the organization were relieved--although they admittedly missed their issue of the Encore--that another financial burden was not hanging over their heads. Also, it was the host school's good fortune to come through with the $300 guarantee, plus $50.00. The secretary's report gives some idea of the situation:

> Significant among the business items of the Grambling Conference was the motion to discontinue the publication of the NADSA Encore for the year in order to clear the organization of indebtedness. This motion enabled the organization to carry through its obligations in several situations without the embarrassment derived from lack of funds.[22]

It was decided at the 1958 Florida Conference that another issue should be published, but at the 1959 conference at Lincoln University it was decided that an issue of the Journal would not come out until 1960. Instead of the Journal which had become a burden to the Association, the members found some consolation in a Newsletter with less financial obligation. It was the general feeling among the Association's members that there will be sufficient funds on hand to pay the printer in advance for the (1960) issue of the Encore.

The writer feels safe in saying that The National Association of

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[22] Report of the Twenty-First Annual Conference of NADSA (April 3 - 6, 1957), p. 2.

Dramatic and Speech Arts like any other Speech or Theatre organization cherished its publication. It seems obvious that the Journal filled a place in the professional and scholarly lives of members of the association, other interested teachers, and workers in the field. One feels that the Journal was of especial interest to teachers in Negro Colleges and Universities. Admittedly, all of the articles published in the Journal were not of the highest order, but the Association had reason to take pride in its efforts.

CHAPTER VI

DEVELOPING THE CURRICULUM IN THEATRE AND SPEECH

In 1907 the first course in speech was offered in a Negro college. It was at the Agriculture and Technical College, Greensboro, North Carolina.[1] The expansion of separate courses in speech received no impetus until 1920 when Virginia State College offered its first course. Also, in 1920 Bluefield State Teachers College inaugurated a course of study in speech. One finds that speech--including the teaching of speech, general speech, fundamentals or foundations of speech, public speaking and discussion, oral interpretation, drama and theatre, radio, speech science and correction, and the like--in Negro colleges, although impeded by the same forces that have retarded Negro education generally, is making an encouraging progress. Some credit for this progress must go naturally to the Negro Dramatic and Speech organizations--especially the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts.

But in 1924, before the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts' founding, Wiley College, Marshall, Texas introduced a speech course; two years later Xavier University, New Orleans, offered for the first time a two hour course in speech for freshmen and sophomores. Tillotson College, Austin, Texas, offered its first course in speech in 1930. The

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[1]Marcus H. Boulware, "Speech Training in Negro College," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, Vol. XXXIII, (December, 1947), p. 511.

State Teachers College, Montgomery, Alabama, started a course in public speaking in 1930, but it was noted that after that year, the course was not offered again for ten years. In 1930 a speech course was included in the curriculum of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. Princes Anne College, Maryland, set up its first course in speech in 1938, and the next year Georgia State College prescribed a course in speech. By 1940 Bluefield State Teachers College in West Virginia had expanded its curriculum to include two speech courses, one giving technical instruction in the basic principles of speech, the other entitled "The Principles of Persuasive Speech and Debate." After that time many colleges have enriched their speech offerings.

May[2], working on a fellowship from the General Education Board and The Carnegie Foundation for the Improvement of Teaching made a study of Speech Education in Negro Colleges. May admits that she felt from the outset that the burden of doing something about the deficient speech prevalent among Negroes rests with the schools, and particularly with institutions of higher learning. That any far-sighted educational philosophy embraces the adaptation of curricula to the needs of students. The feeling was that in view of the substandard speech used on many college campuses, and among Negroes generally, it was imperative that Negro colleges have strong speech programs. The investigator's feelings were that the Negro colleges should furnish leadership in the study of speech difficulties and deficiencies among students, and in the development of college, secondary school, and elementary school speech curricular

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[2]Florence May, "Speech Education in Negro Colleges," SADSA Encore (Spring, 1948), p. 24.

based in part on these problems. The Negro colleges should graduate persons competent in speech and prepared to teach it in elementary and secondary schools. And above all, the Negro colleges should develop in their students an appreciation of good speech and an awareness of its importance as a social tool.

This partial listing of the obligations of Negro colleges in regards to speech education gives rise to many questions. Are speech programs in Negro colleges adapted to the needs of students? Do they include the utilitarian aspects of speech as well as the artistic and cultural? Do Negro colleges, for instance, have strong programs in speech fundamentals, speech science and speech correction? Are administrators and teachers aware of the scope and importance of speech education? Are those colleges which are interested in strengthening speech programs having difficulty securing teachers with special training in the various divisions of the speech field? If the speech programs are weak, what are the major causes of limitations in them?

In order to go beyond the opinion stage in answering the questions, a comprehensive study was made. According to the investigator, the study had the following ends in view: (1) To determine possible lines of development in speech education; (2) To determine the amount of emphasis given speech in the light of trends across the country; (3) To determine the extent to which the institutions are adapting their programs to the needs of students; (4) To determine needs in regard to teachers for speech education; and (5) To determine the arritude of administrators, faculty

members, and students toward speech.

The major portion of the data for May's study was secured through visits to thirty or more representative Negro colleges. The information gained by visits was supplemented by questionnaires which were sent to colleges not visited. A questionnaire was sent to a number of white colleges in various sections of the country. The purpose of this questionnaire was to determine trends in speech education, particularly in the areas in which most Negro colleges were located.

May's study was completed in 1950. From the catalogs of 38 Negro colleges it was found that only 5 or 18.4 per cent offered majors or minors in speech. Judging by the majors, minors, and speech courses listed, emphasis tended to be concentrated in drama, a broad orientation to other areas of speech training not being generally provided for the students. The catalogs showed relatively few departments of speech, there being only 7 departments in the 38 colleges. Lists of faculty members included very few persons who had reference to "speech" or any specific area of the field in their titles.

Thirty-nine accredited or provisionally accredited four-year institutions classified by the United States Office of Education as colleges offering liberal arts, and eight teachers colleges cooperated in the study made by May. It should be pointed out that the classification "colleges offering liberal arts" covers the majority of Negro colleges, land grant colleges included. In the spring and summer of 1947 and in the spring of 1948 May made visits to 44 of the colleges for the purpose of getting first-hand information about speech education in them. Data

obtained by questionnaire from 185 colleges predominantly or solely for white students form a part of the frame of reference May used in interpretating the information from the Negro colleges. These colleges are located in various parts of the United States, but in the treatment of data, emphasis was placed upon the 72 colleges offering liberal arts and 30 teachers colleges in states in which Negro colleges in the study are located, both groups of colleges being affected by similar regional factors.

Extent of Curricular Programs in Speech.[3] In regards to majors and minors in speech, it was found that of 46 Negro colleges visited or contacted, only one-fifth offered majors or minors in speech compared with more than one-half of 102 white colleges of similar types and sizes as the Negro colleges, and located in the same areas. Four, or 8.7 per cent of the Negro colleges had minors only, but in 5, or 10.9 per cent, both majors and minors were available.

A major in general speech was available in only one Negro college, and a minor in general speech, in only two colleges. Five of the colleges offered majors in theatre, and six minors in theatre. It would seem that at the time of this study, opportunities for concentration in speech were severely limited for students attending Negro colleges.

In regards to courses in speech, the study indicated that courses in speech were offered in all areas of speech in the Negro colleges

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[3] Ibid., p. 8.

but not to the same extent as in the other colleges in the study. In no area of the field of speech did the Negro colleges offer proportionately as many courses as white colleges of similar sizes and types. The average number of speech courses in 31 colleges offering liberal arts was 3.8 in comparison with 10.0 in similar white colleges. Taken size group by size group, there was still a wide difference in the extent to which speech courses were offered in the Negro colleges generally. For example, in the small Negro colleges with enrollments of fewer than 500, from 1 to 4 courses in speech were offered, with the median number being 2. In white colleges of the same type and size, from 1 to 19 courses were offered, with a median number of 6.

It appears that formal instruction in discussion and debate was not offered to any appreciable extent in the Negro colleges, only 3 of 31 colleges offered courses specifically designed for concentration in these speech areas. Some discussion was included in a number of other courses, however, particularly fundamentals of speech and regular public speaking courses. It seems important to mention that 80 per cent of the administrators thought that a course in fundamentals should be required of all students. And these same administrators felt, in the majority, that this required course should come in the freshman year so that students might have the benefits of the instruction and experience in later college years. As may be seen from the differences between the percentage of colleges offering a required fundamentals course and the percentage of administrators in favor of such a course, courses in

speech fundamentals were not in existence as often as administrators thought them desirable.

Extent and General Nature of Co-Curricular Speech Programs.[4] Co-curricular programs in speech appeared to be more highly developed in the Negro colleges than the curricular programs. Co-curricular refers to co-prominence of speech and drama activities with English in the Division of the Humanities. The colleges had as wide a range of co-curricular activities in speech as the other cooperating colleges. Full-length, one-act, and children's plays were presented comparatively more frequently in the Negro colleges than in the other colleges. There were also more choral speaking and assembly programs in the Negro colleges. The writer has the feeling that college chapel services and assemblies are held more frequently in the Negro colleges than is the case in the other colleges.

In the area of public speaking, it appeared that the Negro colleges were for the most part less active than the other colleges in the study. One notes that only 40.7 per cent of 27 colleges offering liberal arts sponsored intercollegiate debating in 1947-48 in comparison with 55.9 per cent of similar colleges in other states, Intramural discussion was frequently indicated as a co-curricular activity in the Negro colleges, but intercollegiate discussion was developed in the colleges to a small extent, a much smaller percentage of them than of the other colleges sponsoring this activity. Original oratory and an organized

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[4] Ibid., p. 9.

speakers' bureau likewise appeared less often in the Negro colleges.

On the whole, work in radio had not developed in the Negro colleges to the extent found in the other colleges in the study.

A number of the Negro colleges participated in drama festivals. Some of the colleges also sponsored state drama festivals for high school students, and in this way encouraged participation in drama and higher standards of performance in the secondary schools of their states. Debate, discussions, and extemporaneous speaking tournaments and state or regional oratorical contests were much less frequent occurrances among the Negro colleges than among the other cooperating colleges. At the time of the study, the Negro colleges had developed state or regional organizations promoting public speaking activities only to a small extent.

Departmentalization of Speech.[5] Speech had not been departmentalized to any great extent in the Negro colleges at the time of the study. Whereas 59.4 per cent of all the white colleges in the study had separate departments of speech, with a larger percentage of the colleges offering liberal arts having them, only 7, or 14.9 per cent of the Negro colleges had separate departments. In 4 of these 7, speech was offered in the English Department and a Department of Speech. One additional college offered speech in a Department of English and Speech. Most of the separate departments in the Negro colleges were called Department of

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[5] Ibid., p. 10.

Drama or Department of Drama and Speech. In the majority of the other cooperating colleges the separate department carried the name, Department of Speech, although there was considerable variation in this regard.

It seems significant that almost 80 per cent of 43 presidents and administrative deans in the Negro colleges thought that curricular work in speech should be handled as courses in speech in the English Department rather than in a separate department of speech. The two reasons they gave for their stands were: (1) There is a danger of over departmentalization, particularly in the small college, and (2) setting up a separate department of speech is not feasible because of administrative and financial difficulties.

It was found that a number of the presidents and deans thought a separate department of speech would be desirable in "a large college or university." Although the majority thought that it was neither feasible nor desirable to have separate departments of speech in their colleges, most of them believed that speech should be given emphasis as separate courses in the English Department, that co-curricular programs in speech should be enlarged, that budgets for speech activities should be increased, and that persons with special training in speech should be employed to handle the work in this field.

Objectives of the Speech Program. There was comparatively greater stress in the Negro colleges on the objective "To improve students' competence in using language in everyday situations" than in the other colleges in the study. Obviously, this emphasis upon giving students speech

skills which equip them to function more effectively in day-to-day speech situations stems no doubt from the great awareness in the Negro colleges of deficiencies in the speech of large numbers of the students.

Other objectives given in speech programs were: (1) To increase competence in using language in everyday situations, checked 100.0 by the 38 Negro colleges; (2) to improve thinking habits, personalities, percentage checking 84.3; (3) to improve the speech of prospective classroom teachers, percentage checking 60.5; (4) to develop skilled performers for the public stage, radio, or lecture hall, percentage checking 21.0; and (5) to prepare teachers of speech for elementary and secondary schools, percentage checking 15.8. One notices that in the Negro colleges a smaller amount of stress was placed upon preparing teachers of speech for elementary and secondary schools than was true of the colleges solely or predominantly for white students. But on the other hand, there tended to be slightly greater emphasis upon developing skilled performers for the public stage, radio, or lecture hall.

The Speech Program in Relation to the Needs of the Students. A comparison of Negro colleges with white colleges with respect to speech training serves to point up the status of speech in colleges generally. However, a more fundamental consideration is the speech program in relation to the speech needs and abilities of Negro college students.

Voorhees[6] made the point that speech in the Negro college is not

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[6]Lillian Voorhees, "Speech in The Negro College," The Talladegan, Vol. LVII (May, 1940), p. 1.

essentially different from that in any other college. According to Voorhees, "Speech is a human experience, qualified, it is true by environmental, psychological, and other background factors, but essentially the same regardless of artificial, national, and racial barriers present in our civilization."[7] It was Voorhees' feeling, seemingly, that it may be conceded that fewer differences appear in speech of different racial groups on the higher cultural levels where there is similarity of background and training such as in the college-bred person of both races. In the main both authors may be in agreement that the speech needs and abilities of Negro college students do not differ in kind from those of students in other colleges. But because of environmental influences and lack of intensive training in speech in Negro elementary and high schools, there appears to be a larger incidence of substandard speech among Negro college students than among college students in general.

It seems a fair assumption that since a large percentage of Negro college students have lived in environments not conducive to the development of good speech habits or well-integrated speech personalities, it is possible that training in speech can be of particular significance in their lives.

The majority of respondents for the Negro colleges felt that large numbers of the students needed an extensive program of remedial speech.

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[7] Ibid., p. 1.

And from this fact it may be reasonable to assume that this is indicative of the importance of corrective speech in the Negro college. Perhaps one should point up the fact that 50 per cent of the respondents for the colleges offering liberal arts were of the opinion that many of the students had poorly used voices and that their speech was marred by substandard pronunciation. Approximately 43 per cent observed substandard diction, and almost 39 per cent, extreme maladjustment to the speech situation. These are subjective estimates, one realizes. For few valid studies of the speech needs and abilities of Negro college students have been made. However, the feeling is that these estimates serve to indicate what appear to be rather widespread speech problems among Negro students. Also the availability in the colleges of speech clinics and trained speech clinicians would no doubt facilitate the process of speech improvement. It was found that only four of thirty-eight Negro colleges visited or contacted in 1948 had speech clinics.

It seem significant that the majority of administrators expressed themselves in the 1948 study as only partially satisfied with the extent and nature of the speech programs of their colleges, with thirty per cent being definitely dissatisfied with the curricular programs, and ten per cent with the co-curricular programs. And one feels that it is to the credit of the administrators that many of them appeared interested in expanding their speech programs.

Problems Connected With Expansion of Speech Programs.[8] These

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[8] Op. Cit., p. 12.

are, listed in the order of their frequency, the most vital problems found connected with expansion of speech programs: (1) inadequate budgets; (2) lack of facilities and space in physical plant for speech activities, particularly in drama and speech correction; (3) too few full-time teachers of speech; (4) speech program a weak appendage of the English Department; (5) overcrowded curricular programs (in other areas); (6) little school-wide emphasis on speech; (7) insufficient courses in speech to achieve the objectives of a sound speech program; (8) difficulty in securing faculty members with training and experience in speech; (9) courses in speech not long enough in quarters or semesters to achieve the objectives of a sound speech program; (10) no experimentation or research to determine the program best adapted to the needs and abilities of the students.

Other reasons given frequently for weak programs were: Speech classes too large for effective work; insufficient relations between speech program and community needs and interests; too heavy teaching and co-curricular loads for speech teachers; little or no demand for strong speech programs on the part of the students; too few co-curricular activities to meet student needs; and too little faculty interest in the work in speech.

The problem of financial support is basic to the solving of most of the other problems; lack of funds for the educational problem in general naturally affects the work in speech. The examination of the support of co-curricular activities shows that in the majority of Negro

colleges, as in the white colleges cooperating in the study, the major part of funds for co-curricular activities came from the general funds of the colleges. And, interestingly enough, the majority of the administrators who were interviewed indicated that the financial support for speech activities should be increased.

It seems important to mention that May's feeling was that, in spite of the importance of increased funds for speech activities, perhaps most basic to strengthening programs of speech education in Negro colleges "is the stimulus provided by additional trained personnel in speech."[9] In speaking of what the administration had done to encourage "speech consciousness" on one college campus the investigator points out:

> The Director of the Division of Arts and Sciences in one of the colleges said that the administration had continued to "search" for well-trained speech instructors. The Dean of Instruction in this college said that very little had been done in speech because there had been "no trained person directing the work in speech."[10]

May said further in regard to trained personnel for speech:

> The head of the English Department in another college, one wishing to establish a concentration in speech, said, "The problem of carrying out the recommendations concerning a concentration in speech is largely based on the difficulty of securing trained personnel to do the work. At present it is carried out by English teachers who had had some training or experience in speech or some interest." This college had nine classes a semester in public speaking, play production, and interpretation but no teacher whose major work in undergraduate or graduate school was in speech.[11]

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[9] Florence May, "Speech Education in Negro Colleges," SADSA Encore, (Spring, 1948), p. 12.

[10] Ibid., p. 12.

[11] Ibid., p. 12.

The situation seems serious in that the 1948 study showed that the Negro colleges did not average one full-time teacher of speech. In contrast, the average number of full-time teachers of speech in seventy-two white colleges offering liberal arts was five. Fewer teachers in the Negro colleges had degrees in speech: only 34.2 per cent of those in colleges offering liberal arts had speech degrees in comparison with 79.5 per cent of speech teachers in similar white colleges. Most of the degrees in speech among Negro teachers were in drama on the graduate level, this situation reflecting the lack of availability of majors in general speech and in special areas of speech in Negro colleges.

The finding was that, in general, the greatest demand seemed to be for persons prepared to teach in several areas of the field of speech, although drama directors and technicians, speech correctionists, and persons prepared to coach intercollegiate debating were frequently mentioned.

It is obvious that the study made by May only showed the general availability of various phases of speech education at the time the study was made. It made no attempt to evaluate specific procedures in individual colleges in view of the objectives of education, the needs of given groups of students, and the purposes of the colleges.

The investigator was dealing with averages and not individual colleges, and stated that "It is to be admitted that this . . . does not do justice to the excellent speech programs which several colleges

are developing."[12] The final concern was that "A genuine concern with the fullest development of its students makes solving this problem one of the major responsibilities of the Negro college."[13]

A number of studies have been made about speech training in Negro colleges. The study made by Boulware[14] included 103 Negro institutions doing work on the college level. Of this number, 13 were private schools, 48 were denominational schools, 43 were state supported, 8 were normal schools offering two or three years of training, 7 were municipal colleges supported by cities, 9 were four-year teachers colleges, and one was supported by the Federal Government. Two of the institutions were professional schools of theology, and 5 had schools of theology offering degrees. Two law schools were operating at two universities, and one university, was located in Nashville, Tennessee.

In order to secure data concerning the teaching of speech in these colleges, Mr. Marcus Boulware prepared an inquiry blank which he formulated and sent to each school. It included questions requesting information concerning the speech courses offered, the use of speech tests, major and minor offerings in speech, training of the speech staff, the extra-curricular program, the required courses in speech, practice teaching facilities, availability of the services of the clinic, and the pre-

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[12] Ibid., p. 13.

[13] Ibid., p. 13.

[14] Boulware, "Speech Training In The Negro College," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, Vol. XXXIII, (December, 1947), p. 509.

valence of speech departments and administrative units.

Seventy-two out of the 103 colleges responded to the questionnaire; 61 sent catalogs; 25 sent personal letters, and six promised to forward catalogs as soon as they were released by the press. Personal letters were sent to all of the schools of theology with the request to discuss the nature of speech training in their curricular, and four of them responded. The following is the result of Boulware's inquiry. This is the number of colleges offering courses in speech, including the areas of speech offered.

Debate and Discussion. Colleges offering debate, 26; public speaking and debate, 2; public discussion, 3; and parliamentary law, 1.

Dramatic Production. Colleges offering study of drama and theatre, 19; play production, 60; playwriting, 2; and radio drama, 3.

Oral Interpretation. Colleges offering oral interpretation of literature, 7; advanced oral interpretation, 1; choral speaking, 2; story telling, 1.

Speaking. Colleges offering fundamentals of speech, 27; oral English, 8; public address and oratory, 53; psychological and clinical speech, 3; phonetics and science, 5; speech education (the teaching of speech), 3.

Course listed as English. Colleges o fering English drama and Shakespeare, 28; Negro drama, 1; history and survey of drama, 12; Greek drama, 1; and modern drama, 10.

Extracurricular Speech. Colleges with Dramatic Societies, 59; Debate Societies, 22; Speaking and Oratorical Contests, 15; Radio Clubs, 1; Discussion Forums, 3; those offering Debate Awards and Throphies, 7; and Debate Awards and Keys, 2.[15]

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[15] Ibid., p. 510.

Six colleges reported that they didn't offer any courses in speech. And yet two of these required freshmen and sophomores to deliver speeches and declamations in chapel before the student body. For these performances, students earned one hour of credit each semester.

It has been recorded[16] that until 1940 there were no recognized departments of speech in Negro colleges. Up until that time speech training was mainly offered by English departments whose staffs had very little training in speech. One source points out that speech training had long been included in the curricula of white colleges and universities when the first Negro colleges were organized . . . .[17] It is to be remembered, too, that these schools--although referred to as "colleges" and "universities" were from the beginning mostly grammar and preparatory schools; it was near the turn of the century before they offered work on the collegiate level. It has already been pointed out that when the rules of the best college rating agencies were applied, only a small number of the colleges were rated as "colleges" in Jones' study of 1916.[18]

Now one finds that practically all Negro colleges during the latter half of the nineteenth century had literary societies which offered opportunities for writing, speaking, and declaiming. It is noted that Johnson C. Smith had the Matoon Literary Society; Selma University in Alabama had the Athenian Literary Society for women and a young men's

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[16] Ibid., p. 507.

[17] Ibid., p. 511.

[18] Thomas Jones, Negro Education in the United States, p. 58.

debating society "in the late 1890's."[19] At Storer College, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, class declamations were held as early as 1890, and "the Lincoln Debating Society was organized in 1895."[20] That school's catalogue of 1899 said, referring to club organizations, "They will be conducted by students, will meet weekly, and will furnish abundant opportunity for drill in reading, speaking, composition, and parliamentary law."[21]

As was pointed out in the study made by May, Boulware, whose study was published in 1947, found that "since 1940 many colleges have enriched their speech offerings."[22] Some reports from the colleges show the following situations. From Stowe Teachers College, St. Louis:

> Our speech comes in the first year, as a requirement for all students in our institution, Teachers College and Junior College alike. The speech unit is connected with the English Composition Workshop and grows out of the needs of the students during their freshman year. During the second, third, and fourth years, clinical services are available for any student who needs the same.[23]

The president of Minor Teachers College, Washington, D. C. said:

> You will note from this material . . . that Minor offers courses in speech arts, public speaking, and play production. In addition to this, the school has a speech clinic. All freshmen are screened for speech defects as part of their entrance examination. Those with serious defects are eliminated as physically incapacitated to become teachers. Those with remedial defects are placed in a clinic where remedial measures are taken to correct their defects. Each student has a record-

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[19] Op. Cit., p. 511.

[20] Ibid., p. 511.

[21] Ibid., p. 511.

[22] Ibid., p. 512.

[23] Ibid., p. 512.

> ing of his voice at the beginning of this remedial program, and at appropriate intervals in order that he may detect and work on these defects which are characteristic of his speech.[24]

At Talladega College in Alabama, Dr. Lillian Voorhees who taught there from 1928 to 1943 provided the following information: When she went to this college in 1928, there was only one course offered in speech. Public Speaking was required of all students. A course was added in dramatic production, one in dramatic interpretation, and one in dramatic composition. For a number of years she taught Shakespeare and a class in verse forms. When the college changed its curriculum to a general program, several changes were made. Instead of requiring a course in public speaking, a course in foundations of speech was given two days a week throughout the freshman year along with the course in English. A recording machine was purchased and each freshman made recordings. Studio work was required of students having defects in speech . . .[25]

Now a member of the staff of Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee, Dr. Voorhees reports:

> Every freshman is required to meet in speech class once a week as part of his English work. It was intended that each freshman would make a recording, but the school was unable to get the speech laboratory started because of priorities on machines, etc. Fisk University does not offer a major in drama because of inadequate speech staff; but it does retain the drama minor. Several new courses in speech and drama have been added. There is also a course in public speaking which has been in existence for some time.[26]

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[24] Ibid., p. 512.

[25] Ibid., p. 513.

[26] Ibid., p. 513.

One notes that at Hampton Institute, Hampton, Virginia, a Communications Center was conducted which trained students in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Subjects included were composition, literature, speech, French, Spanish, and German. The following courses in speech were offered: speech laboratory, psychology of reading and speech, radio workshop, theatre workshop, clinical practices, dramatic survey.[27]

Most of the theological schools also gave attention to speech. At Howard University's School of Religion, Dr. William S. Nelson stated that "practice preaching is offered in the course in Homiletics. A student is asked to preach before his class. He is corrected by the instructor and his classmates and graded on the basis of the quality of his work."[28]

From Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Georgia word was that "for the past nine years only one semester's course of two hours has been offered in speech training. Our students get some additional training in courses in Homiletics, and the Making and Delivering of Sermons."[29]

Dr. Charles H. Shute, Dean of the Theological School, Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, North Carolina, said: "As far back as recollection goes, practice preaching in one form or another has been carried on in this school. The work was once confined to the class-

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[27] Ibid., p. 513.

[28] Ibid., p. 513.

[29] Ibid., p. 513.

room with only theological students as audiences."[30] Dean Shute pointed out that:

> Later, the exercise was carried to the chapel where speakers had much larger audiences, consisting of the general student body and faculty members. At present, in addition to practice preaching in the classroom, students preach at the mid-week prayer service. As an incentive to greater interest and effort the H. Beecher Jackson Homiletics Prize is offered the one excelling in that subject.[31]

Each of these studies indicates that there is considerable need for greater attention to be placed on speech in the Negro college. And then, too, each indicates some efforts toward improving speech in these schools. Each study alludes to the fact that the work of The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts (now the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts) has served to promote improved programs of speech and drama in the Negro colleges. No study has been made since the May study that is as complete as hers. Nor has any study been any more carefully formulated than the Boulware study. But the work of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts has been a part of the majority of the Negro colleges since 1936. May's study prompted, one feels, because of her work and association with the organization. Her work culminated in a doctor's dissertation at Northwestern University; Marcus Boulware's study culminated in a doctor's dissertation at the University of Michigan. Both were influenced by

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[30] Ibid., p. 513.

[31] Ibid., p. 514.

their association with the SADSA organization.

Boulware and May are a part of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts and the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts' teacher improvement campaign. They are products, as it were, of the association because they have both held memberships in the organization. They both received their degree after membership and work in the organization. So did Thomas Poag (Ph.D. Cornell); Lillian Voorhees (Ph.D. Columbia); Thomas Pawley (Ph.D. Iowa) James O. Hopson (Ph.D. Pennsylvania); Thurman Stanback (Ph.D. Cornell); Granville Sawyer (Ph.D. Southern California); Gladys Forde (Ph.D. Western Reserve); J. P. Cochran (Ph.D. Iowa).

With the exception of Thomas Poag, Lillian Voorhees, and James Hopson, all of these persons named above have had their degrees conferred since the two studies above.

All Negro colleges are not members of the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. This organization cannot take credit nor blame therefore for the progress or short comings in many such colleges in the area of speech and drama. However, NADSA's representation is broad enough to bear some relative significance to the work in this field in the Negro college. The membership of the association includes approximately 25 colleges. And of that group more than half offer courses in speech, although many of the schools do not as yet boast of separate speech departments. In the majority of the cases still, speech and drama shares co-prominance with English in a Division of the Humanities. In at least five situations, where the work in speech and drama is in the Eng-

lish Department, the person who handles the speech work serves as chairman of the department.

In at least three cases where there are well defined separate speech departments--Tennessee State, Florida A. and M. and Grambling College--students who have graduated from these departments have, after obtaining at least the master's degree, returned and are working or have worked in the departments from which they graduated. Two of these schools, Tennessee and Florida offer the master's degree in speech and drama. Tennessee, Florida and Grambling each has a staff of six or more people working in speech and drama.

Also, many of the colleges which do not hold membership in NADSA do hold membership in the Intercollegiate Dramatic Association, the organization founded by NADSA's Honorary President and founder, Randolph Edmonds. For the most part both of these organizations are drama and theatre organizations. From the beginning their activities were largely co-curricular or extracurricular. One is inclined to feel that the co-curricular programs were ahead of the curricular programs in Negro colleges; and that the co-curricular programs have "eased" the curricular programs in. Most studies will show that co-curricular or extra-curricular speech and drama activities are more highly developed in Negro colleges than curricular programs; or at least this was true before the present decade. It may be that speech people seized upon an opportunity because they felt that was what administrators wanted--something with a public relations aim, similar to the athletic teams. Such activities in a college or in a high school give the student of special aptitude

an opportunity for more intensive and extended experience than is possible either in formal courses or in the general education program. It is to be remembered that in many of the Negro colleges; especially the small ones, the extra-curricular activities provide the only training in speech activities. In such a situation Negro administrators, college, university, and high school, would do well to treat the intercollegiate and interscholastic speech activities as having educational value identical with those that govern classroom instruction in speech and drama.

The work of SADSA and NADSA has been, to a very large degree, more in the nature of extra-curricular activities. The play festivals, the debates, the interpretative readings, and the discussion sessions in which the students of the member colleges have engaged have, given the students an opportunity for more intensive and extended experience than would have been possible either in formal courses or in the general education program.

This organization has concerned itself with speech and drama festivals, tournaments, and other interscholastic activities among the high schools. The annual speech and drama clinics which have been held in North Carolina, Florida, Tennessee, and Louisiana have had an especial influence on the work of the high school program; and have reflected in turn on the college programs, as the high school graduates move on to the colleges.

In one of its reports to the Advisory Council of AETA, NADSA, through its president, emphasized its extra-curricular projects. It mentioned that the association had undertaken several projects to tighten up its ranks

and its activities during the season, 1956-1957. Important among these projects and activities are the following: It has attempted to foster Speech and Drama clinics for the High School drama directors, Speech and Debate coaches, and the like, in the regions.

It has attempted to increase emphasis upon community drama programs sponsored by the Educational Theatres of the various colleges and universities, with increased emphasis on adult participation.

It has attempted to improve the literary activities, especially in speech and drama, in each member college and the secondary schools in the regions.[32]

This report indicated that all states within the boundary of the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts have contributed to the projects and activities listed above. However, it showed that a few states and colleges affiliated with NADSA were taking the lead. It pointed out with special mention and states taking the lead, North Carolina, with headquarters at Fayetteville State Teachers College; Tennessee, with headquarters at Tennessee A. and I. State; Florida, with headquarters at Florida A. and M.; Louisiana, with headquarters at Grambling College; Georgia, with headquarters at Fort Valley State; Arkansas, with headquarters at Arkansas A. M. and N. College; Missouri, with headquarters at Lincoln University; and Kentucky, with headquarters at Kentucky State College.

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[32] Minutes of Advisory Council, AETA, "Report From The National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts," (December 27, 1956), pp. 23 - 24.

It was noted in the report to the AETA Council that Florida, with headquarters at Florida A. and M., and Louisiana, with headquarters at Grambling College appeared to reflect the greatest amount of consistency in their annual promotional programs of high school speech and drama activities. The section of the report that dealth with Louisiana read in part:

> . . . . There is a very effective literary organization, the Louisiana Interscholastic Athletic and Literary Association, administered by the principals of the State's High Schools; but with all consultant services coming directly from the Educational Theatre staffs of the State Colleges. The activities of the colleges and the high schools are reciprocal. The colleges provide consultant services and the high schools in turn feed the colleges a better trained high school graduate, with a keener interest in speech and drama.[33]

A typical report to NADSA by a Southwestern Regional Director may reflect on some of the activities from that region in general and from Louisiana in particular. It follows:

> The . . . Louisiana Interscholastic Athletic and Literary Association in collaboration with the NADSA, held its meeting at Grambling College on January 16, 1954. The theme of the meeting was, "The Problems of Judging Contest and Festival Plays and Speeches."[34]

Later in this same report it is seen that:

> District One held its Drama Festival at Grambling College on March 20, 1954, with six schools taking part. The schools were: Lincoln High, Ruston; Homer High School, Homer; Haynesville High, Haynesville; Webster High, Minden; Grambling High, Grambling; and Ringgold High, Ringgold. The winner in District I was Ringgold High. Grambling High was second and Webster High was third.

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[33] Ibid., p. 23.

[34] Report of the Eighteenth Annual Conference of NADSA (April 28 - 30, 1954), p. 15.

The State Drama Finals were held at Grambling College on April 10, 1954. It featured the twelve first place winners of the LIALA's twelve districts throughout the State of Louisiana. Featured were: Central High of Natchitoches, in The True in Heart; Morehouse High of Bastrop, in Strange Road; Peabody High of Alexandria, in Thirst; Central Memorial High, Bogalousa, in The True in Heart; Capital High of Baton Rouge, in On Vengeance Height; Ringgold High of Ringgold, in Smokescreen; W. O. Boston High of Lake Charles, in Minor Miracle; Madison Parish High of Tallulah, in On Vengeance Height; Donaldsonville High of Donaldsonville, in Lonely Lady; Princeton High of Princeton, in Wilbur's Wild Night; and Holy Ghost High of Opelousas, in Sky Fodder.

State winners were: 1st place, Ringgold High, Mrs. Birdie Coleman director; 2nd place, Central Memorial High, Miss A. L. Hannibal director; 3rd place, Gaudet High, Miss Joyce Nero director; and 4th place, Capital Avenue High, A. C. Odell, director.[35]

A typical report to NADSA by a South Central Regional Director may reflect on some of the activities from that region and from several of the colleges in particular. The report follows:

Down Alabama way, one can already notice signs of steady improvement in the speech and drama offerings for the colleges and their communities, and all reports indicate that a great deal has been done in the other states that comprise the South Central Region. Implementing the regular college lyceum calendar are scheduled exchange plays that are given annually by Talladega College and Alabama State College. Invitations have been received from other institutions such as Tuskegee, Tennessee State University, Grambling and Miles College for next year. In addition, the college (Alabama A. and M.) has made it a practice to engage a Shakespearian troupe and a Negro troupe each year. This year (1953) the Washington Repertory Players (with headquarters at Howard University) presented The Glass Managerie for summer school audiences. Next year . . . Tennessee State University will be engaged for a performance of Power Without Glory during their summer tour.

At Alabama A. and M. College, no regular program of dramatics and speech is offered. However, beginning this summer, a step in that direction will be taken with the initiation of a workshop in Play Production. Three new courses will be taught for workshop participants: "Directing School and Community Plays," "Seminar in

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[35] Ibid., p. 15.

> Theatre," and "Stagecraft and Design." A course in Modern Play Production is offered already in the Junior year to English majors and minors.
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> This year the director of the Alabama A. and M. Thespians was extended an invitation to act as judge for the Georgia All-State High School Drama Tournament held in Atlanta, Georgia. Other member institutions of NADSA which had representatives serving as judges were Clark College (Miss Esther Jackson) and Spelman College (Mr. Baldwin Burroughs).[36]

It is felt and hoped that the high school drama festivals have grown in popularity because of the general educational values which they are able to and have contributed to the motivation and training of students in drama and communicative skills. Through careful evaluation by experts in drama (good judges who are trained in drama and theatre), of plays entered by various schools, students receive many valuable suggestions and directions. The chief agency for dramatics--as an extra-class activity--in the high schools is the dramatics club. The drama club is probably the way to provide the necessary nucleus of students who are to carry out the program of dramatics. Regional directors of NADSA have operated their motivating tactics from the objective that extra-class activities in speech and drama must be clearly comprehended. It would seem that their aim has been to concentrate on strong drama clubs sponsored by competent directors. The next aim has been the organization and development of functional play festivals. In the high schools the emphasis has really been on the tournament. But to follow through with the idea--

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[36] Ibid., p. 13.

the festival of one-act plays has been notable for giving club members a chance to see many plays given by other schools; to give them a chance to observe the way the shows are done; and, of course, to gain by such an experience. The feeling has been widespread in NADSA that the motivation of a trip to a festival is also an excellent means of consolidating interest among members of a drama organization.

All of this concerns the part the colleges play in administering the high school drama program. NADSA is an organization made of Negroes colleges and universities, with membership open to secondary schools, mainly because of what the organization feels it can offer to the secondary schools. But one feels that colleges in and out of NADSA should reappraise periodically the role they can and should play in administering the high school drama program. It is felt that the college's role, among other things, should be that of motivating and training students and helping drama directors consolidate interest among members of drama clubs. Sponsoring state drama festivals has been found to be a tangible and valuable means by which a college may offer service in administering a high school drama program.

One college--Grambling College--was inspired enough by the work of NADSA in its attempt to improve the program of dramatics in the high schools to initiate a Special Drama Day Chapel. The idea behind this program was to sponsor, in addition to the clinics and workshops, a day when twenty-five or thirty high school groups and their directors would come to the campus and be the guest of the college's speech and drama department; listen to an address by an outstanding person in the Negro

theatre; meet and talk with such a person or persons; and exchange ideas on and about acting, directing, and producing plays on the high school level. A Banquet given through the courtesy of Grambling's president was the culminating activity. The Banquet was held about 1:00 p.m. This always allowed the visitors enough time to eat relaxed, to talk a while after the meal, and them drive to most of their homes by or before night. The following is a short description of the program:

> Grambling holds a special Drama Day Chapel each year. These programs feature an outstanding person in the theatre. In 1951, Professor Randolph Edmonds spoke on "The History of the Negro in the Theatre." In 1953, at the Special Drama Day Chapel, Dr. Thomas Poag spoke on the subject, "Achievements of the Negro Actor in a Changing World." In 1954, Dr. Thomas Pawley spoke about "Theatre Arts and the Educated Man;" and in 1955 Professor Baldwin Burroughs spoke about "Styles of Acting From the Greeks to the Present." In 1956, the speaker for the Annual Drama Day Program was Dr. Granville W. Sawyer. His subject was, "Communication in Human Relations."[37]

The conference of the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts met on Grambling's campus in 1957 and the special day was set aside until 1958. In 1958 Dr. J. Preston Cochran spoke to the assembly about theatre history. After 1960, when the program will have been resumed, it will be expanded to include outstanding people in the Educational Theatre in general. Negro Educational theatre workers were brought in first as a means of stimulating and motivating Negro students into the feeling that if these people could make progress they could too. The "Spirited" program of the state drama program in Louisiana (among Negro

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[37] NADSA Encore (Spring, 1956), p. 7.

high schools) shows some indication some good has been accomplished through this Special Drama Day Program.

Another feature of the work of the NADSA association has been the emphasis on Community Drama Programs. As part of its program of community activities the colleges of NADSA have carried plays to neighboring elementary and high schools. The Florida A. and M. theatre reported:

> . . . . In addition, Professor Edmonds has given performances of his three act drama, Earth and Stars in Atlantic City, Baltimore, Greensboro, Mobile, Montgomery, and other cities. A program of Mr. Edmonds' one act plays was carried by the Florida A. and M. players through the state of Florida.[39]

It seems obvious that significant community relations have been engaged in, bettered, or improved and expanded through the work of the Educational theatre in Negro colleges. The following report serves as an illustration:

> . . . . Although LeMoyne College (Memphis, Tennessee) has campus activities in drama, the most significant and extensive activity of the LeMoyne Players in the past few years has been in the community playing under all sorts of conditions, for all kinds of groups, and at the present time, all kinds of plays, though the dramatic fare had to be selected with limitations at first The group has been sponsored by high schools, churches, by the chamber of commerce, and by alumni groups. A net result of these enterprises has been not only to improve relationships with other groups in the community, but to enhance the work in dramatics for students on campus. The aims of the group are worthy of imitation by other groups working in their communities. They aim (1) to try to generate the interest of the community in good plays (2) to train audiences to listen well, (3) to become interracially known and accepted, (4) to give students opportunity to appear before audiences other than at LeMoyne, (5) to teach the ability to become adapted to all situations confronting a group of players going to all sorts of places.[40]

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[39] SADSA Encore (Spring, 1949), p. 55.

[40] Report of the Sixteenth Annual Conference of NADSA (April 1 - 4, 1952), p. 6.

A second report comes from another college:

> Successful off-campus productions of Deep Are The Roots brought additional prestige to the Little Theatre (of Talladega College). In Charleston, South Carolina an audience of one thousand witnessed a stirring performance with over one hundred persons turned away. A full house at the downtown 8th Street Theatre in Chicago also gave its full approval to the acting in this controversial drama . . . .[41]

Poag makes the point that the Negro Educational Theatres which are found in leading Negro colleges are presenting contemporary plays to both white and Negro audiences North and South. He says further that:

> It is not unusual to find mixed audiences witnessing plays at Fisk University, and Tennessee A. and I. State in Nashville, Tennessee. Negroes are invited in Nashville to witness the plays sponsored by the Wesley Foundation, an organization for Methodist students attending Vanderbilt University, Peabody, and Scarritt Colleges. Between the second and third sets of the plays staged by the Wesley Players, refreshments are served to the mixed audience, giving members of both races an opportunity to converse, discuss the play, and to establish interracial understanding.[42]

The educational theatre in the Negro colleges and universities is more at the point of pioneering in the community drama work. Fisk University, LeMoyne College, Tennessee State, Dillard University, Grambling College, and Lincoln University with its Summer Theatre, are schools with some few years of experience to their credit in this area. For the most part these schools offer courses in Community Drama, and around these courses is worked the activities of community participation.

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[41] Op. Cit., p. 56.

[42] Thomas E. Poag, "Better Human Relations Through the Medium of Dramatic Art," SADSA Encore (Spring, 1951), p. 28.

These and other Negro colleges report that significant community relations have resulted through the work of the educational theatre in the Negro colleges and universities.

CHAPTER VII

A SUMMARY ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

In the preceding six chapters, several aspects of the development of the educational theatre in Negro colleges and universities have been surveyed. In doing so, it has been impractical, if not impossible, to avoid taking into account other phases of the broad field of speech education and Negro higher education; but the focal point of the study, despite digressions, has been the development of the educational theatre in Negro colleges and universities.

Chronologically, the survey has extended to the present year. This year, 1959, marked the anniversary of the Negro dramatic association which serves as the nucleus of the study. But the developing period extends from 1911, the year of the first dramatic organization on a Negro college campus.

Four main divisions of development have been dealt with in this study: (1) The development of the Negro colleges and universities; (2) the pioneers in the movement toward a Negro theatre, with emphasis on the work of playwrights and actors; (3) the development of the Negro dramatic organizations, with emphasis on the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts; and (4) developing the curriculum in theatre and speech, with emphasis on speech training in the Negro colleges and curricular and extra-curricular programs.

The first of the divisions has been dealt with rather extensively, for before there could be development of any particular area in the colleges there had to be colleges. The Negro college was, first, a

college born of freedom and need. It was a college symbolizing man's highest mental qualities; and probably testifying to the right of enjoyment of every opportunity without distinction.

At the very outset in the development of higher education for Negroes, no recognition could be given for the quality of the work done. Colleges for Negroes could not meet even the minimum standards required for accreditation. As early as 1916, only three Negro colleges were found with standards, student body, teaching force, equipment, and income, sufficient to warrent the characterization of college. And it was not until 1930 that a few Negro colleges were accredited.

The colleges were created for the most needy group--the Freedmen. Many of the colleges were chartered with no reference to race but subsequently became Negro colleges. The Negro institutions were named "colleges" and "universities" by their founders who expected them to grow up to their ideals ultimately. But first, the mission schools were obliged to become elementary school, high school, and college in turn. Education in the Negro college took divergent viewpoints in the capable but sharply different philosophies of Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. DuBois. Booker T. Washington felt that no limits should be set to the attainment of the Negro in arts, in letters or statesmanship; but that the surest way to reach those ends was by laying the foundations in the little things of life that lie immediately at the Negro's door.

DuBois felt that the Negro race would improve in stature through its exceptional men; that if the Negro made money the object of man-training, he would have money-makers but not necessarily men; that if he made technical skill the object of education, he might possess

artisans but not, in nature, men. However, philanthropy preferred to concentrate its efforts on industrial training for Negroes. In such a situation, Hampton Institute and Tuskegee Institute enjoyed the bounty of philanthropy; but not to any sizeable degree greater than many of the other private colleges. The cause of higher education for Negroes was embarrassed by the multitude of inferior institutions that sprang up everywhere in the South and flooded the section with cheap degrees and cheaper people. These, too, were private schools.

The educational functions at Hampton and Tuskegee--the former where Booker T. Washington received his training and the latter where Washington's philosophy was tried and developed--were from the beginning to train Negro youth to do well and dignify the vocations. Both are credited with arousing interest generally in Negro education throughout the country.

In regard to the Negro state colleges, it was found that every Southern state eventually had one, and many have two and three colleges for the higher education of Negroes. The evidences of evils that accompany mushroom growth are as prevalent in these colleges as was true of the private colleges. These schools, too, were from their beginning labeled "universities," "colleges," and "institutes" more by the indices of a public concept and of a public change of concept than by any standard in quality of work.

The Negro colleges have made progress. From their beginning until the present the emphasis in the majority of these colleges has been on the non-occupational rather than occupational education. The colleges are in the main liberal arts colleges. They were from the

beginning imitations of the New England white schools and many remain imitations of these schools. Some, however, are showing signs of change which indicate that a type of education more closely related to earning a living, developing good communities, and providing better homes appears to be receiving more widespread attention. The Land-grant colleges have taken the lead in this movement.

The periods through which the Negro colleges have passed are: Founding through Missionary effort and personal philanthropy, roughly from 1864-1903; the period of organization and physical development through subvention from the great philanthropic boards and foundations from 1903-1916; the period of increased public funds, combined with organized philanthropy, 1916-1930; the rise of larger and more adequate physical plants and stimulated Negro efforts toward educational planning; and the period from 1930 to the present.

In the survey of the second division of development, the pioneers in the movement toward a Negro theatre, the activities of pioneering playwrights are of two sorts. The playwrights are of two sorts. There have been playwrights who wrote about Negro life, but were white; and playwrights who wrote about Negro life who are Negroes.

The drama about Negro life developed in relationship to the developing and nurturing of American drama as a whole. It was not until about 1915 that playwrights of a high order entered the field of American drama. This was the time when white playwrights began writing seriously about Negro life as well as about American life as a whole. Before this time the Negro was ignored dramatically just as he was ignored socially, politically, and humanistically. Beginning with

Uncle Tom's Cabin, there was an attempt to make the Negro character resemble a human being, but this resulted only in a study of types. Then there followed the propaganda plays against the institution of slavery, yet portraying the slave-owners sympathetically. Little was done for the stage Negro other than to give the Negro servants a more natural dialogue. Rigley Torrence, one of the early white playwrights, is credited with being one of the first playwrights to recognize the dramatic possibilities of native Negro life. His work was made known through the Hapgood Players, an all Negro group.

The pioneering writers in the development of a native American drama recognized the Negro life and folkways as a potential source of native idioms from which a major contribution to a national drama could be developed.

Early among the white playwrights of merit were Eugene O'Neill and Paul Green. The Emperor Jones marks a progress in American drama and in O'Neill's art; and it is a definite part of the Negro's dramatic history. For his central character in the Emperor Jones, O'Neill chose a Negro pullman porter. And he created in this Negro character an individual with something royal in his nature and something pitiful in his hopeless struggle against fate.

Paul Green's In Abraham's Bosom showed a preoccupation with group problems in his writing. In this play Green reflects the tragic struggle of a courageous and enterprising Negro to educate himself--and, in turn, others--in spite of apathy on the part both of his Negro peers and of the whites.

Before the plays of Eugene O'Neill and Paul Green the Negro

character in American drama had been rigidly stereotyped from his early sporadic stage appearance until about 1915. The rigid stereotypes of the Negro as a character reflected successive stages of Negro social development. During the years between the Revolution and the Civil War, the predominant Negro character types were the comic baffon and the happy, carefree slave, flourishing under benevolent patronage. With playwrights like O'Neill and Green generations of enforced buffoonery and caraciture began to give way to more realistic interpretation of the Negro folk; and after then, slowly and at times almost imperceptibly, the Negro actor and playwright are functioning and creating for audiences sophisticated enough to recognize the universality of human problems and to concede the negligibility of color per se.

A number of white writers were not concerned with tension and conflict in regard to Negro characters and life. Simple pictures of the comedy and tragedy of particular regions and plantation life are provided in the work of such writers. This is particularly true in the plays of Julia Peterkin and the plays of the Heywards, Porgy being a good example.

Marc Connelly's The Green Pastures, while composed of quanitly humorous Bible stories is a mature expression in dramatic art. In this play the American stage Negro grew up in the sight of critics and the public.

The Emperor Jones, In Abraham's Bosom, The Green Pastures and Deep River, were among the best plays of Negro life written by white playwrights. Porgy gave only simple pictures of the comedy

and tragedy of South Carolina. Aside from that it is generally thought of only as a monetary vehicle for Negro actors.

Negro playwrights have pioneered in the drama and theatre, and so have Negro actors. Prominent among this group of playwrights are Willis Richardson, Randolph Edmonds, Melvin Tolson, James Butcher, Owen Dodson, Thomas Pawley; John Ross, Richard Wright; and the most recent young playwright, Lorraine Hansberry, whose play A Raisin In The Sun was produced in March, 1959, in New York.

Most of the Negro writers took as their task to rid the public of its ministrel-show conception of the Negro. Many tried, but all were not successful in their attempts, to come to grips with life in their plays.

Randolph Edmonds, a sensative and creative artist, who wrote Six Plays For a Negro Theatre, seems to have made the most lasting impression in the movement toward the Negro theatre in his writing and in his organizational work in the Negro colleges. All were not happy with Edmonds' plays because they were written in Negro dialect. Edmonds defends his plays. He says they contain four elements: worthwhile themes, sharply drawn conflict, positive characters, and a melodramatic plot. These elements do appear in his plays.

Richard Wright's Native Son made something of an impression. This play was written for the purpose of giving the picture of a prejudiced and capitalistic social order, rather than any intrinsic human deficiency, as the cause of the frustration and rebellion of underprivileged Negro youth of America. It is possible that the play did not accomplish all the author had in mind; but, with the

aid of Paul Green, it probably came close to expressing the author's purposes powerfully and objectively.

The Negro actor has made a limited but definite contribution to the theatre. Charles Gilpin, Richard B. Harrison, Charles Winter Wood, Rose McClendon, Dick Campbell and other actors in the Federal Theatre, The Hapgood Players, and the like, were among the most promising Negro actors. They made a start to eliminate the shuffling Negro from the theatre.

The third division, Negro Dramatic Organizations, has been dealt with quite extensively. The major emphasis in this part of the study has been given to the development of The Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts. The reason for this is that it has been in this association that considerable work has been done to develop a genuine Negro theatre in the Negro colleges and universities.

It was Randolph Edmonds, the founder of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts (he also founded the Intercollegiate Dramatic Association previous to this one), who made the prediction that "The hope of the genuine Negro theatre is to be found in the organizational approach to the associations of Negro colleges." The study shows that Edmonds then made efforts to put his theory to work. The activity of the SADSA is Edmonds' theory in action. This study reflects the precedings of the annual meetings and activities; the membership of the organization; the officers; the constitution and policies; and a study of the association's Journal. The findings are that the association has succeeded in encouraging the study of

the drama and has made use of the college organizations as laboratories for the production of plays and the study of Negro folk material. The work of the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts, under the watchful eye of its founder, Randolph Edmonds, has made a definite contribution toward a genuine Negro theatre. Plays of Negro life have been written by college directors and college students; one-act play festivals have provided acting opportunities for at least ten to twenty college groups each year; students have learned discussion techniques by participating in discussion groups on matters pertaining to the theatre; and through Newsletters, Bulletins, and the Journal the organizational work on each campus has been publicized for the benefit of member schools. A number of creditable articles have been written and published in the SADSA Journal: Encore, by members of SADSA.

The study shows that the SADSA owes its existence primarily to the impetus of its founder, who served for seven successive years as president. The need for the directors to get together in conference; the need for bringing about recognition of dramatic work in the curriculum; and the need for raising the standard for dramatics in Negro schools and colleges were needs which were keenly realized by the founder and other college directors with whom he became associated in the building of the association. The SADSA held its first meeting at Dillard University, in New Orleans, Louisiana, February 25, 1936. The association held its twenty-third annual Play Festival and Conference at Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri, April 14-17, 1959. Students have played a vital part in the development of

the organization and in the development of the educational theatre in the Negro colleges and universities. In addition to Randolph Edmonds, Lillian Voorhees has played a major role in increasing the importance of student projects in the association. It was through the student projects that the interest among college students was maintained. A number of directors have contributed to the annual play festivals; but the work of Thomas E. Poag stands out in this regard. It was largely through the work of Randolph Edmonds and Thomas Poag that the Play Festival has remained the nucleus of the association's activities. The study shows that other features which have developed in the association are: (1) A Children's Theatre Section; (2) An interpretative Reading Section; (3) A Discussion Section; (4) A Debate Section; (5) A High School Drama Section; and (6) A Playwriting Section.

The association changed its name from the Southern Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts to the National Association of Dramatic and Speech Arts in 1951. The change was made because both the membership and program had become national in scope and because a majority of the members wished to remain an affiliate of the American Educational Theatre Association with representation on its Advisory Council. The change in name brought about only minor changes in the activities of the organization, and a few changes in the association's constitution.

The association published a Journal. The Encore was published to furnish publicity outlets for the organization and to encourage

and preserve creative efforts in the field of drama and speech. The association experienced its greatest financial burden in publishing the Journal. It tried but was unsuccessful in getting a foundation to underwrite the publication. Its small membership fees and uncertain door receipts from the play festivals were not sufficient to continue the Journal without continued financial loss. The Journal was published from 1948 through 1956, when it had to be temporarily discontinued. It is to be resumed in 1960. The Journal filled a need and gave the SADSA membership a certain pride in themselves. It filled a place in the professional and scholarly lives of members of the association, and other interested teachers and workers in the field. It seems that the association was justified in taking pride in its publication.

The fourth division of the study, Developing the Curriculum in Theatre and Speech, is, in the main, tied in with the organizational work of the SADSA. Here the writer dealt with the matter of Speech Training in the Negro Colleges; Curricular and Co-Curricular Programs; and Extra-Curricular Activities, with a View to Significant Community Relations.

Co-Curricular programs in speech appeared to be more highly developed in the Negro colleges than the curricular programs. In regards to curricular offerings, it was found that in no area of the field of speech did the Negro colleges offer proportionately as many courses as white colleges of similar size and types. Speech had not been departmentalized to any great extent in the Negro colleges. A large percentage of presidents and administrative deans in the Negro

colleges thought that curricular work in speech should be handled as courses in speech in the English Department rather than in a separate department of speech. Their reasons were: (1) There is a danger of over-departmentalization, particularly in the small college, and (2) setting up a separate department of speech is not feasable because of administrative and financial difficulties. Where there were speech programs there was comparatively greater stress in the Negro colleges "To improve students' competence in using language in everyday situations," as the main objective of the program. But it was found that, in general, speech in the Negro college is not essentially different from that in any other college. Speech is, it seems, a human experience, qualified, it is true by environmental, psychological, and other background factors, but essentailly the same regardless of artificial, natural, and racial barriers present in our civilization.

A number of administrators expressed the need and the desire to expand the program of speech in the Negro colleges. But there were vital problems found connected with expansion, the most vital of which were: (1) inadequate budgets; (2) lack of facilities and space in physical plant for speech activities, particularly in drama and speech correction; (3) too few full-time teachers of speech; (4) speech program a weak appendage of the English Department; (5) overcrowded curricular programs (in other areas); (6) little school-wide emphasis on speech; (7) insufficient courses in speech to achieve the objectives of a sound speech program; (8) difficulty in securing faculty members with training and experience in speech; (9) courses in speech not long enough in quarters or semesters to achieve the objectives of a

sound speech program; and (10) no experimentation or research to determine the program best adapted to the needs and abilities of the students.

It was not surprising that co-curricular or extra-curricular programs in speech appeared to be more highly developed in the Negro colleges than the curricular programs. It was pointed out in Chapter I that the Negro colleges is in desperate need to rid itself of the shackles of tradition. This chapter suggests that many of the Negro colleges should seize the opportunity that is now theirs to throw off the shackles of the tradition-wrapped higher education programs and essay new approaches in curriculum and structure. The older, private, liberal arts colleges have suffered more on this point than other Negro colleges. Many of these schools have held to the traditions of their founding. The emphasis on their speech programs has thus been co-curricular and not curricular. However, it was in these colleges that the Negro Drama Organizations found leaders and pioneers in the movement toward the Negro theatre.

This study has revealed that a number of the Negro colleges participated in drama festivals. Some of the colleges also sponsored state drama festivals for high school students, and in this way encouraged participation in drama and higher standards of performance in the secondary schools of their states. In some few of the Negro colleges, especially the smaller ones, the extra-curricular activities provide the only training in speech activities. In such situations it seems obvious that Negro administrators may do well to treat the inter-collegiate speech activities as having educational value with

those that govern classroom instruction in speech.

Significant community relations have resulted through the work of the educational theatre in the Negro colleges. Plays by college drama groups have been sponsored by high schools, churches, by the chamber of commerce, and by alumni groups. This has not only improved relationships with other groups in the community, but has enhanced the work in drama for students on the campuses. In the community-related programs the Negro educational theatres have had among their aims: (1) to generate the interest of the community in good plays (2) to encourage audiences to listen well; (3) to improve the relationships between the colleges and the communities; (4) to give students the opportunity to appear before audiences other than in their own colleges; (5) to give students the opportunity to become adapted to all kinds of situations confronting a group of players going to all sorts of places.

The study revealed that better community relations and better human relations have resulted through the work of the educational theatre in Negro colleges and universities.

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Floyd Leslie Sandle was born in Magnolia, Mississippi, on July 4, 1913. He received his early education in the public schools of Magnolia and entered Dillard University in the fall of 1933. At the June commencement of 1937 he received the Bachelor of Arts degree. He became an instructor at Grambling College the summer of 1938. He entered the University of Chicago the summer of 1941. He continued his education at this university the summer of 1942. From October, 1943 to December, 1945, he served in the United States Navy. Upon receiving his honorable discharge, he returned to Grambling College as an instructor in Speech and Drama and as drama director. He returned to the University of Chicago the summer of 1946 and remained there through the fall quarter, 1946. The University of Chicago awarded him the M. A. degree at its winter convocation, 1947. Upon his return to Grambling College he resumed his duties as director of drama and became assistant professor of Speech and Drama. He was made acting dean of instruction at Grambling College for the year 1947-1948. He became head of the newly created Speech and Drama Department in 1949. He entered New York University the summer of 1951 to study toward the doctorate and remained there for the school year 1951-1952. He returned to his position at Grambling College the summer session of 1952. He entered Louisiana State University the summer session of 1954 to continue work toward the doctorate degree.

EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

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Approved:

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